YOUR 100% OFFICIAL DUNGEONS & DRAGONS® MAGAZINE

ELVES • DWARVES • HALFLINGS • GNOMES

dragon®

ISSUE 328 · FEBRUARY 2005

THE RACES OF D&D

DWARVES AT WAR

ELF MAGIC

NEW PC RACE

NO MORE EXCUSES!

NEW BARD SPELLS

ECOLOGY OF THE WILL-O'-WISP

02

0 71486 01823 0

U.S. $6.99 | CAN $9.99

ISSUE 328 FEBRUARY 2005

Dragon

VOL. XXIX NUMBER 9

CONTENTS

paizo.com/dragon

Publisher: Keith Strohm
Editor-in-Chief: Erik Mona
Senior Art Director: Sean Glenn
Associate Editor: Jason Bulmahn
Assistant Editors: Mike McArtor and F. Wesley Schneider
Graphic Designer: Sarah Robinson
Advertising Director: Rob Stewart
Director of Operations: Jeff Alvarez
Prepress Manager: Kelly O'Brien
Circulation Manager: Pierce Watters

CONTRIBUTING ARTISTS
Kyle Anderson, Tom Fowler, John Gallagher, Kyle Hunter, Niklas Jansson, John Kovalic, Cara Mitten Tony Moseley, Anna Serfass, David Walstrom, Jonathan Wayshak, Eva Widermann, Aaron Williams

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS
Shelly Baur, Peter Bergting, Andy Collins, Richard Davis, Dale Donovan, Richard Farrese, Mike Fehlauer, Eric Haddock, Robert J. Hahn, Mark A. Hart, James Jacobs, Rob Lightner, Hal Maclean, Mike Mearls, Richard Pocklington, Amber E. Scott, Erik Seligman, Troy E. Taylor, Nicholas J. Thalasinos, Michael Trice, Kieran Turley, Cristo Yanez, Jishou Yang

PAIZO PUBLISHING, LLC
2700 Richards Road, Suite 201, Bellevue, WA 98005-4200

Chief Executive Officer	Chief Operating Officer
Lisa Stevens	Keith Strohm
Technical Director	Director of Marketing
Vic Wertz	Jenny Bendel
Corporate Accountant	Director of Operations
Dave Erickson	Jeff Alvarez

Dragon® (USPS 318-790) is published monthly by Paizo Publishing, LLC, 2700 Richards Road, Suite 201 Bellevue, WA 98005-4200, United States of America. (ISSN# 1062-2101) Periodicals Postage Paid at Bellevue, WA, and at additional mailing offices.

No part of this magazine may be reproduced (except for review purposes) without the prior written consent of the publisher. Material published herein does not necessarily reflect the opinions of Paizo Publishing, LLC, its employees, or its editorial staff, who are not liable for opinions expressed herein. Most product names are trademarks owned by the companies that publish those products. Use of the name of any product without mention of trademark status should not be construed as a challenge to such status. Trademarks related to the Dungeons & Dragons brand, including *Dragon*, *Dungeon*, and D&D are trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. and are used under license from Wizards of the Coast, Inc., a division of Hasbro, Inc.

POSTMASTER: SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO
Paizo Publishing, 2700 Richards Road, Suite 201, Bellevue, WA 98005-4200.

BACK ISSUES: paizo.com/dragon or call (425) 289-1340.

SUBSCRIPTIONS/CHANGE OF ADDRESS: Contact Paizo Publishing at subscriptions@paizo.com or call (425) 289-0060. Although we accept subscriptions to prison addresses, delivery is subject to the discretion and/or whim of prison personnel. If you have not received a magazine or premium, please consult with your mail room authorities. This publisher is not responsible for non-delivery.

ADVERTISING: Contact *Dragon's* Advertising Director, Rob Stewart, at (425) 289-1345. All ads are subject to approval by Paizo Publishing, LLC, which reserves the right to reject any ad for any reason. Advertisers and/or agencies of advertisers agree not to hold Paizo Publishing, LLC liable for any loss or expense from alleged wrongdoing that may arise out of the publication of such advertisements.

DISTRIBUTION: National and international distribution is provided by Curtis Circulation Company, 730 River Road, New Milford, NJ 07646. Tel: (201) 634-7400. Fax: (201) 634-7499.

OPEN GAME CONTENT: Unless otherwise noted, this Paizo Publishing, LLC product contains no Open Game Content. No portion of this work may be reproduced in any form without permission. To learn more about the Open Gaming License and the d20 System License, please visit wizards.com/d20.

©2005 Wizards of the Coast, Inc.

FEATURES 22

22 **PARAGONS OF THE KINDRED**
Make your PC a paragon of his faith with four new prestige classes devoted to the most popular nonhuman gods.

32 **DWARVES AT WAR**
Why do dwarves always carry the best armor possible and fight in small tactical units? Why are they unafraid of spiders, orcs, and giants? Learn the ins and outs of dwarven warfare and learn how to fight like a dwarf.

40 **NOBODY'S PERFECT**
A new batch of flaws allow nonhumans to take advantage of all their disadvantages. Quirky characters from fat halflings to insomniac half-elves are now at your disposal. Finally, your fussy-eating, slow-healing elf wizard can get the most from his drawbacks.

32

40

CONTACT US!

Letters to the Editor: scalemail@paizo.com
Submissions: dragon@paizo.com
Subscriptions: paizo.com/dragon
Back Issues: paizo.com/dragon
Customer Service: customer.service@paizo.com
Sage Advice: sageadvice@paizo.com
Advertising: rob.stewart@paizo.com

TABLE TALK

8 FROM THE EDITOR
Erik looks into *Dragon's* future.

10 SCALE MAIL
The redesign discussion continues with a focus on #325.

16 FIRST WATCH
Previews, notes, and news for gamers.

FAMILIARS

50 GAINING PRESTIGE
Become a *magic missile* master as a force missile mage.

54 ECOLOGY
Where there's a will-o'-wisp, there's a way—to doom!

60 WINNING RACES
Saurian shifters: Savage scaly shapeshifters.

64 BAZAAR OF THE BIZARRE
Discover the magic of the ancient elven empires.

68 SILICON SORCERY
God of War. Artifacts, gore, and the power of gods.

70 SPELLCRAFT
Cool bard spells. No, really!

74 UNDER COMMAND
Are you ready for some DUNGEONBALL?!

80 SAGE ADVICE
The sage answers your rules questions.

84 CLASS ACTS
Tips and tricks for your favorite class.

96 COMICS

ON THE COVER

Battered and beaten, Kyle Anderson's unlikely duo aren't sure who their enemies really are.

THE ROAD AHEAD

Five months ago, my predecessor presented a bold new vision for *Dragon* that ushered in a passel of new features, put some longstanding departments out of their misery, and introduced cosmetic and semantic changes aimed at making the magazine more accessible and useful to Dungeons & Dragons enthusiasts.

Since most of our readers favor "homebrew" campaign settings over official worlds like the Forgotten Realms, Greyhawk, and Eberron, *Dragon* would henceforth avoid articles with strong ties to those campaigns. Since the similarly revised *Dungeon* had widened its focus beyond simply providing adventures to become a more general resource for Dungeon Masters, *Dragon* would focus primarily upon the player, with each new issue boasting a new prestige class, a new PC race, and a raft of features aimed at helping D&D players get the most out of their favorite characters. The venerable "Bazaar of the Bizarre" became "The Magic Shop," since the former was deemed too confusing for young or first-time readers. These changes would make the magazine more useful to a wider variety of D&D fans, which would make for a larger, happier audience.

I have a somewhat different approach. To me, the joy of Dungeons & Dragons isn't found in a prestige class level progression or the prerequisites of a feat. Those things may be necessary to ensure fairness, but they are means to an end, and that end is compelling, exciting fantasy adventure. During my tenure, *Dragon* will focus first on compelling, exciting fantasy, providing features that will spark your imagination and practically beg to be added to your campaign. The rules will come second in emphasis (though we'll continue to obsess over balance, rest assured). Prestige classes, feats, and new PC races won't completely disappear, but when they do show up it will be within a greater context rather than as stand-alone rules unto themselves.

We'll continue to publish articles like Winning Races, Novel Approach, and other popular "familiars" from the recent relaunch, but we'll do so less frequently to free up more pages for features.

This extra space should provide an opportunity to take a more detailed look at D&D and the worlds behind the game. We've already commissioned several "weighty" articles on the Forgotten Realms by Ed Greenwood and Eric L. Boyd and on Eberron by the setting's creator, the inimitable Keith Baker. We'll periodically glimpse the fantastic vistas and horrifying depths of D&D's Great Wheel cosmology. Issue #330 will feature an absolutely stunning article on the madness-inducing Far Realm by Bruce Cordell, who created that warped reality way back in second edition's *The Gates of Firestorm Peak* adventure and who still manages to squeeze in some wriggling, tentacular horror in nearly every project he touches. I think you're going to love it.

Lastly, I don't want any of our readers to get the impression that since our sister magazine has changed its focus to include articles aimed at Dungeon Masters, that *Dragon* will feature articles aimed only at players. *Dragon* is the magazine of record for D&D enthusiasts of all stripes, whether they play, DM, or simply love the worlds of Dungeons & Dragons. As time goes by, we'll provide exciting articles for everyone interested in this great game and hobby. Take it from the guy who also edits *Dungeon:* that includes Dungeon Masters.

Keep in touch, and as always let us know how we're doing by emailing us at **scalemail@paizo.com** or visiting our messageboards at **paizo.com**. We're glad to have you along for the ride.

ERIK

Erik Mona
Editor-in-Chief

NEXT MONTH IN DRAGON

MARCH #329

Dragon gives you the best in gaming, presenting new official rules, original game content, great advice, and the perfect inspiration for your D&D game. In each issue, you'll also see what cool products are on the horizon, find out what other players are up to, and get an insider's look at the industry. Get more from your game: Get *Dragon!*

The Legacy of Beowulf
by Nicholas Herold
Match your blade against true Giants in the Earth with statistics and background from one of the greatest works of fantasy literature ever put to pen. Can your characters defeat Grendel, Grendel's Mother, the Firedrake, or even Beowulf himself?

The Petit Tarrasque (And Other Stories)
by Kyla Ward
Get the skinny on the real-world origins of some of D&D's most fearsome creatures, including the basilisk, cockatrice, golem, gorgon, medusa, catoblepas, leucrotta, salamander, and more. Plus, learn how to alter classic creatures' stats to match their mythological origins.

Mesopotamian Mythos
by David Schwartz
The cradle of civilization offers a complete pantheon for your D&D campaign.

Demonomicon of Iggwilv: Pazuzu
by James Jacobs
The first in a series of articles examining the character, cults, and thralls of D&D's classic demon princes. This month: The Prince of the Lower Aerial Kingdoms comes home to roost.

Plus!
The Ecology of the Kenku, A Novel Approach: Eberron's *Marked for Death*, and of course, Class Acts, Bazaar of the Bizarre, Under Command, Silicon Sorcery, First Watch, Scale Mail, Sage Advice, and comics.

LETTERS

Tell us what you think of this issue. Send an email to **scalemail@paizo.com**. Please include your name, city, and state.

Who Are You Who Are So Wise in the Ways of Science?

Thanks for printing such a great magazine to read every month! However, I do have one bone to pick: In issue #325's Knowledge Check, you quote *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*. However, you misquoted it! The answer to King Arthur's query "Who are you who can summon fire without flint or tinder?" is "I... am an enchanter." Only then does Arthur say "By what name are you known?" and he replies "There are some who call me... Tim." My friends and I filmed a "remake" of that movie for a eighth grade drama project—the whole hour and a half—and I played Tim (among others), so I was rather shocked when the quote was wrong! However, I do enjoy the Knowledge Checks—keep up the good work!

Lucas Johnson
Via Email

Yes, yes, yes. But explain again how sheep's bladders may be employed to prevent earthquakes.

Boy Power

Was the cover of issue #325 a deliberate attempt to parody *Maxim* and other men's magazines? The top cover blurb mentioned ale and wenches.

Timothy C. Shanahan
Via Email

Yes, it was. If you ask me, though, the cover lacked the appropriate cleavage and innuendo to make it a truly great parody.

Blessed Are the Teachers

My first experience with DUNGEONS & DRAGONS was in the late 70s in fifth grade when I saved my allowance to buy that new shiny red box with the red dragon on the cover from a department store that has since gone out of business.

My fondest memories of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS are teaching third and fourth graders to make dungeon maps on carbon paper during indoor recess. Me, a woman, teaching boys how to make and play with maps! It was unheard of back then. It's no wonder that I grew up to acquire an illustration degree and a love for all things sci-fi and fantasy.

To make a long story short, I took up playing DUNGEONS & DRAGONS again a year ago, when my younger brother of seven years convinced me that DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is still fun and even better than I remembered. So now I am playing every Saturday as an epic-level halfling cleric and alternating weekends as a human monk. I never pictured myself ever playing again, especially at age 32.

Thanks for the old memories and for the new ones I make every weekend. I am enjoying my first subscription to *DRAGON* every month and look forward to many more. Now if I can get my husband onboard my quest will be complete!

Lynn Rosa
Harrisville, RI

I learned the D&D game as a third grader thanks to an after school class taught by a highschool student. I'd love to hear from any readers who teach kids the game this way, and I'd especially love to hear from the gamer who taught this future DRAGON editor how to play D&D

BLAST FROM THE PAST
D3: VAULT OF THE DROW

What began in the *Against the Giants* series (G1–3) continued with *Descent Into the Depths of the Earth* (D1). From the *Shrine of the Kuo-Toa* (D2), the hearty PCs continued their assault against the denizens of the Underdark by invading the very heart of the drow empire. *Vault of the Drow* (D3), orgionally published in 1978, brings the trilogy to a close and bridges the gap between the G and D series and the extraplanar adventure *Q1: Queen of the Demonweb Pits*. *Vault* is the sixth adventure in the supermodule *Queen of the Spiders* (see *DRAGON* #327).

Among its innovations, D3 introduced statistics for Lolth, the Demon Queen of Spiders, as well her servant mezzodaemons and nycadaemons (which later became mezzoloths and nycaloths). It also provided statistics for drow, kuo-toa, and svirfneblin.

The adventure took the PCs into the Vault of the Drow, a massive cavern dominated on the northern end by the drow city of Erelhei-Cinlu. All manner of creatures resided in Erelhei-Cinlu, but drow dominated the city. *D3: Vault of the Drow* also described eight drow noble houses of various strengths, including the treacherous House Eilservs. The adventure found its climax in the Great Fane of Lolth, where the PCs chased the Spider Queen to her Abyssal lair (as detailed in Q1).

DRAGON revisited the *Vault of the Drow* in issue #298. This month, in *DUNGEON* #119, the adventure "Wrath of the Abyss" sees the sinister return of the drow with the surviving exiles of House Eilservs, along with a few more dangerous guest appearances by NPCs from the original *Vault of the Drow*.

at Countryside Elementary School in Edina, Minnesota. I owe you one, buddy.

Dead Setting Office

Recently, I was on the Wizards of the Coast message boards, specifically, the Ask the Designers Q&A thread. One of the issues was: Will Wizards of the Coast revive Maztica, Kara-Tur, or The Horde campaign settings?

Rich Baker said Kara-Tur was a remote possibility, but Maztica and The Horde were definite "nos." Mr. Baker said that sales on these products were too low to warrant an update for third edition. I asked him if there was a chance that maybe *Dragon* could devote issues specifically to these settings as was done for Dark Sun. His reply was "Great idea. Perhaps you should ask *Dragon*."

So here I am, asking *Dragon*. There are a lot of people on the Forgotten Realms message boards who have expressed interest in seeing these settings revisited and updated for third edition. Perhaps you could print a conversion on the various classes, an update on the magic system for Maztica, or information on what's happening in these lands circa 1373 DR? Perhaps even an article detailing the political situation in Kara-Tur as of 1373 DR? Not necessarily overhauling it for third edition, but just some world info. Ever since the Tuigan conquered Shou Lung in the novel *Dragonwall* we gamers do not know the current status of the largest nation of Kara-Tur.

Vaughn Allan
Via Email

While I wouldn't hold my breath waiting for an update of "The Horde," articles updating Kara-Tur and maybe Maztica aren't out of the question. I strongly suggest checking out Dragon #315, which featured articles set in most of the defunct campaign settings (alas, still no "The Horde" article—the Tuigan simply get no love). We're currently in talks with Ed Greenwood and Eric L. Boyd regarding a passel of new, significant Forgotten Realms articles for 2005, but as of yet these articles will focus on the lands outlined in the Forgotten Realms Campaign Setting hardcover. If a lot of readers want to see material on Maztica or Kara-Tur, we'd love to hear from them here in the letter column. Our impression is that Dark Sun has more fans than both of those settings combined, but we're willing to be proven wrong.

Goblins and Fairies and Trolls, Oh My!

Dragon Talk

Fans of D&D, Magic: The Gathering, and fantasy in general the world over readily recognize the whimsical style of Tony DiTerlizzi. He defined the look of the D&D Planescape campaign setting, illustrated numerous *Dragon* and *Dungeon* articles, and has dozens of Magic cards to his credit. In recent years , Tony's become a New York Times bestselling children's author and just published the last in his five-volume fairy series, *The Spiderwick Chronicles*, with co-author Holly Black. As expected, the art is fantastic, especially the monsters, with a definite nod to one of Tony's favorite illustrators, Brian Froud. Go to **diterlizzi.com** to find out more about these fantastical stories, along with which conventions he'll be attending and where. –Shelly Baur

Slaying the Sales Text

I'm delighted that the cover of *Dragon* #326 is free of the large and unattractive blurbs that previously took up a third of the cover and called for a mere close-up of part of the artwork. This excellent cover, with a truly classic-looking dwarven fighter, an elven swashbuckler who looks like an elf and not a Gray (forgiving the bikiniplate), and a human sorcerer with a nod to the dungeonpunk style—all fighting a band of goblins in the issue's theme (a dungeon) reminded me quite favorably of the much older *Dragons* I have on the top shelf of my collection. I'm still admiring it hours later, and I'm glad you finally gave us all the opportunity to do so once more. Bravo!

Pteryx
Via Email

Thanks, Pteryx. As you can see by the cover of this issue, the "large and unattractive blurbs" have returned, at least for the time being. I've been reading the magazine forever, and I agree that the covers with no "coverlines" (as we call them in the trade) made for much more attractive paintings, but the conventional wisdom says that a magazine simply needs cover lines to successfully compete on the newsstand. We tried #326 as an experiment. If sales don't slump for that issue, it's definitely something we'll try to do again, especially if the painting warrants it, as it certainly did in this case. For the time being, all I can promise is that we'll make the coverlines as unobtrusive and informative as possible.

KNOWLEDGE CHECK

Question: What is this?

Missing Mass Combat

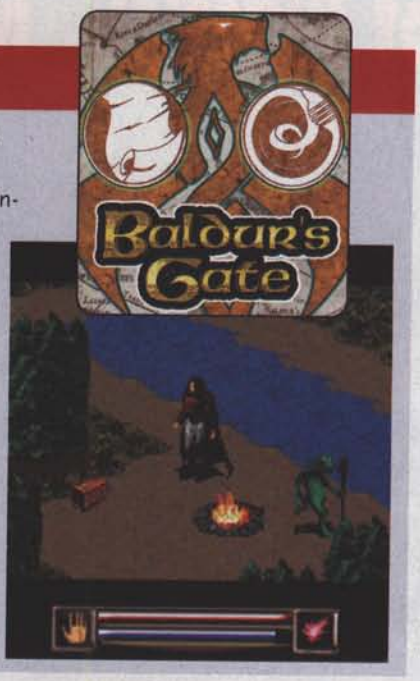
Just dropping you a line to say I enjoy reading your magazine and the improvements have been most appreciated. I know everyone is enjoying the hints and insight about the Dungeons & Dragons skirmishing game, but what about the overlooked part of the game?

The mass combat part!

It would be really great to see a battle report including pictures to see how it's

1-800-DUN-GEON

Dragon Talk



You can't add Elminster to your contact list yet, but now you can explore the FORGOTTEN REALMS on your network-game enabled mobile phone with Sorrent's *Baldur's Gate*. The download is a little shy of 100KB, but the action won't disappoint gamers used to gigs of supporting data. Sure, the story (new to this game) is streamlined and much more linear than its predecessors, but the 3.5 feel keeps players coming back. Choose from four races and five classes (all LG, but who's asking?) and march right in. The combination of traps, puzzles, and monsters make the 15 quests challenging and unique for each race/class combo.

The wee graphics are nicely detailed, but tend to feel more cute than heroic. It's hard to ask much more of the tiny screen though, and the nuggets of FR lore make up for the cartoon atmosphere. The game play is satisfying, with all the right elements of action, strategy, and redistribution of wealth. After the hero has worked through all seven levels—from six to eight hours in real time—and saved the day, the player will more likely think "Now I want to try a sorcerer!" than "Better check my voice mail!" –Rob Lightner

done (or what we are getting wrong) to see all the action.

Chris Wojcik
Tecumseh, ON

That's a good idea, Chris. We're currently tinkering with "Under Command," our miniatures column. It'll be several months before the new format debuts, but I think it'll definitely be a hit with both miniatures enthusiasts and traditional roleplayers. How can the DRAGON *staff accomplish such a seemingly impossible balancing act? Well, we're not quite ready to tell you, yet....*

"In His House in Providence, Great HPL Wrote Stories"

With regard to *DRAGON* #324, I would like to commend you for the lengthy feature on the influence of Howard Phillips Lovecraft as manifested in the worlds of DUNGEONS & DRAGONS and the realm of fantasy gaming. James Jacobs's article illustrated the legacy and significance of the author's tales of the macabre on roleplaying games, cinema, music, and electronic gaming, as well as on the generation of pulp writers emerging in his era.

The Lovecraft feature was also an effective educational tool, as it served to validate the author's literary merit and to establish a viable correlation between the writer's seminal works and the lives of the students I had instructed to read "Dagon" and "The Music of Erich Zann."

I extend this adulation with one caveat, the curious absence of the city of Providence, Rhode Island, birthplace and longtime residence of H.P. Lovecraft. In fact, Providence figures prominently in short stories such as "The Call of Cthulhu," "The Haunter of the Dark," and "The Case of Charles Dexter Ward," and the College Hill and Benefit Street area serve as the unmistakable model for the surrealist New England settings detailed in other tales, such as "The Music of Erich Zann."

Perhaps the most prosaic rationale for the inclusion of Providence in any feature on Lovecraft can be found on his headstone hidden in the meandering lanes of Swan Point Cemetery, not far from his former home along Angell Street on the East Side of the Renaissance City. The inscription reads, "I Am Providence."

"Pn-nglui mglw'nafh Cthulhu R'lyeh wgah'nagl fhtagn!"

Stephen Twining
Providence, Rhode Island

KNOWLEDGE CHECK ANSWER

Answer: "This is my BOOMstick" – Ash from *Army of Darkness*

More Maps, Please!

I've never written to *DRAGON* or *DUNGEON* before, but I thought that I would poke my head in and say my piece. I would really like to give all of you guys, at both *DRAGON* and *DUNGEON*, a great big Huzzah!

I have been an on-again, off-again purchaser of both magazines for about 15 years now. I started playing DUNGEONS & DRAGONS when I was 10 and I just celebrated my 25th birthday. I have great memories of playing D&D before I knew which edition was which, I have even more great memories of AD&D second edition, and I really enjoyed the changes in third edition as well. The revised rules seemed like a no-brainer to me (how in the world did Wizards of the Coast not decide to highlight tables in third edition, anyway?).

The recent changes in both your publications are to me a reflection back to the

days when I started buying your magazines. *Dungeon* was meant for DMs, and *Dragon* was meant for everyone. It seemed to me that lately *Dragon* had been trying to be everything to everyone, and wasn't doing a good enough job at any of the things it was trying to be. I like the new focus, I like the new organization, and I enjoy the articles—as always.

I know you guys get lots of flak for "over-advertising" Wizards of the Coast's releases, but as far as I see it, that's your job. However, I like that the magazines are still interesting and useful, even if the topic is a campaign setting I'm not currently playing.

So to you guys, cheers! Job well done, and you deserve a pat on the back for all the hard work you put into each publication so that I can get my 20-minute fix of new D&D stuff once a month!

Jeff Closs
Quesnel, British Columbia, Canada

PS: *Dragon* Guys! Any chance we'll see a large Eberron poster map with political boundaries? I bought Eberron and if I was displeased with anything it was the lack of the aforementioned map—*Dragon* could fix that for me!

And we'd love to do it, especially after completing the massive four-part World of Greyhawk map that's currently being serialized in our sister magazine, Dungeon. *A giant Eberron map is not currently on the schedule, but the idea has come up more than a few times. What do you guys think?*

(F)Art

I have been a hardcore D&D fan for more than three years now, and have subscribed to *Dragon* for two. In my latest issue, I found a rather upsetting format change. No more pretty pictures (mostly anyway), no more nice borders, no more creative fonts, just plain old text. My real question, I guess, is why? What compelled you to make such a change? I highly doubt that I am the only one who has an opinion about this. I simply find it odd that you would make such a plain design as your new format. On a better note, the issue in which this change occurred had some nice info. I used the chocobo stats to my group's delight (I am the DM, you see). The other articles were great as well. I like the new info for every class now in every issue. I still find it hard to get around the lack of pictures. Maybe you fired your artists to hire better writers? Anyway, keep up the good writing, and I'll be watching those borders.

Grant Lowe
Arlington Heights, IL

The response to our "relaunch" ranged quite a bit, but I think it's fair to say that a lot of readers questioned the more "open" layout approach we took with the new look. Now that the format has had a few issues to sink in and we've had a bit more time to make some adjustments, I'm really interested in what the readers think of Dragon's *current "look." Drop us a letter or stop by the* Dragon *messageboards at* **paizo.com** *and let us know what you think!*

WWFD: What Would Fafhrd Do?

First, thank you for "Seven Deadly Domains" from *Dragon* #323. It ended up a crowning piece to the conclusion of five years of interwoven plots. However, I just read your response to Jeff in issue #325, letting him know you didn't intend to use the classic title Bazaar of the Bizarre for magic item articles, using the clearer and more utilitarian Magic Shop.

What a mistake!

While it might not have quite the cachet it once did, Bazaar of the Bizarre has got to be the catchiest title *Dragon* ever had. I still remember opening up my first or second *Dragon* (around #67, although the current issue at the time was about 100 higher) and being fascinated by the title and article.

Please don't make the self-fulfilling prophecy that the title isn't useful as an indicator. Use it and it will be known to all!

Thomas McQueen
Arlington, TX

You'll note that the column's title has been switched back. It's good to be the king.
—Erik Mona

Cloud Kingdom Games

CLOUD KINGDOM

This issue's Riddle:

Honest child of sand and silver
Standing straight and true,
Any question you deliver
The answer's always you.

Get a new riddle each week in your email. Sign up at: riddles.cloudkingdom.com
Find the riddle answer in our other ad in this issue

Need something more than "String or nothing"?

Riddle Books

Each Riddle Book contains 75-80 riddles for use in role playing games or to challenge you and your friends.

Need a break from Hack & Slash?

Riddle Rooms

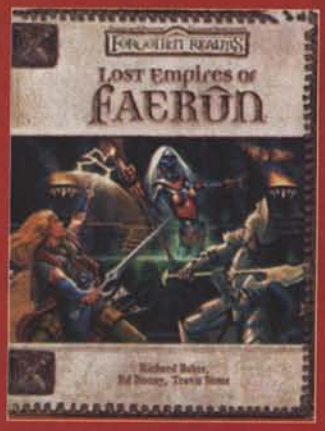
Riddle Rooms are riddles and puzzles presented as rooms that can be added to any dungeon or adventure. Each room has one or more illustrations. Can be used with any system.

For more riddles and games visit us at riddles.cloudkingdom.com

reported by Shelly Baur, Dale Donovan, Mike Fehlauer, and Rob Lightner

PREVIEWS, NOTES, AND NEWS FOR GAMERS

NEW RELEASES



All Indiana Jones wannabes should check out Wizards of the Coast's complete guide to ancient ruins, *Lost Empires of Faerûn*. Previously announced as *Ancient Empires, Lost Empires of Faerûn* (by Edward Bonny and Travis Stout) details many places and forgotten histories of civilizations throughout the FORGOTTEN REALMS. From this quintessential guide to all things dusty and undiscovered you'll learn what monsters to expect, what forgotten magic items you'll discover, and which tomb robbing characters to use next time you decide to delve into the ancient past. DM goodies include maps, descriptions of ruins, campaign ideas, new monsters, ancient artifacts, and enough history to doom players who insist on repeating the mistakes of the *Lost Empires of Faerûn*. –S.B.

Races of the Wild, by Skip Williams, focuses on elves, halflings, and a new player character race, the raptorians. While elves and halflings get tweaked to peak performance levels with numerous prestige classes, specialized items, spells, and more, the raptorians—a race akin to powerful birds of prey—have their intriguing history and culture described for the first time. While members of this new winged race don't have the ability to fly from first level, new aerial feats and options allow player characters to take flight. For DMs, check out new deities, magic items, monsters, NPCs, and maps, presenting the secrets of some of the most beloved races in D&D. –S.B.

AMAZING STORIES 608

Amazing Stories #608 starts out the new year with an exclusive interview with television visionary J.J. Abrams. Offering behind-the-scenes storytelling secrets about his two popular TV shows—*Alias* and *Lost*—the multitalented writer-director-producer even lets slip a few details about his upcoming big-screen venture, *Mission: Impossible III*.

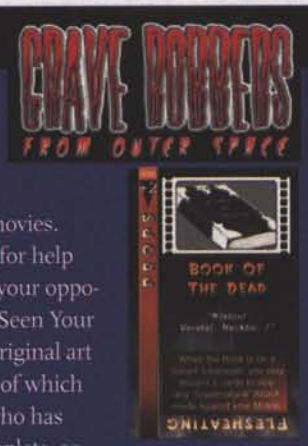
Amazing Stories also talks with *Concrete* comic-book creator Paul Chadwick about scripting the new *Matrix Online* MMORPG and finds out from *Elektra* director Rob Bowman how he turned a comic-book antihero into a silver-screen heroine.

The issue also features original fiction from writers like David Gerrold (*Star Trek* and *Babylon 5*), Keith R.A. DeCandido (myriad *Star Trek* novels), and Bram Stoker Award-nominated author Jay Bonansinga, plus interviews with novelists Terry Pratchett and Gregory Benford, and all the latest book, DVD, and comic-book reviews. *Amazing Stories* #608 is available on newsstands beginning January 4, and also from **paizo.com/amazing**.

GAME GENIUS

From the "So Simple. It's Genius" department: Alea Tools offers colored one-inch diameter, stackable magnets. These little round markers fit perfectly on a standard battle map and, when placed under a figure, can be used to track effects: blue for flying, orange for hurt, red for near death. Use these counters and you'll no longer have to hear your players say "I want to attack the wounded one" and wonder "which one was that?" Alea also sells one-inch zinc washers and one-inch circular hole punches. Attach the washers to your figures for magnetic attraction, or attack old trading cards and magazines with the punch and whip up custom-built counters: swarms, spell effects, chests and furniture, and so on. Alea's gizmos are super useful and amazingly inexpensive. The entire line of Alea's innovative tools can be found at **aleatools.com**. –M.F.

KLAATU! VERATA! NECKTIE!



Looking like something designed by Crow T. Robot and Tom Servo of *Mystery Science Theater 3000*, the *Grave Robbers from Outer Space* stand-alone card game from Z-Man Games is full of characters and locations straight out of horror B-movies. Flee for refuge in "The Cabin In the Woods." Beg for help from "Skippy the Wonder Dog." Get rid of one of your opponent's female characters with the dreaded "We've Seen Your Breasts, Now You Must Die!" Each card features original art and a perfectly cheesy accompanying quote, most of which should be familiar to any gamer or even anyone who has ever sat in on a D&D game. The card game is complete, as in there's no random collecting element, but it is compatible with Z-Man's equally hilarious *Cannibal Pygmies in the Jungle of Doom* and other games in the series. Check out *Grave Robbers from Outer Space* and all Z-Man's other infinitely quotable genre movie card games at **zmangames.com**. –M.F.

SLASH FROM THE PAST

Remember RAVENLOFT? GAMMA WORLD? The simple pleasures of old-school D&D? Then slip on your *goggles of nostalgic seeing* and behold Sword & Sorcery Studios's resurrection of several classic TSR franchises. Sword & Sorcery is a subsidiary of White Wolf (creator of *Vampire: The Masquerade*) and this fanged pedigree is evident in their member studio, Arthaus's, excellent handling of the second edition nightmare realm RAVENLOFT. This is especially true with their third edition update of the popular MASQUE OF THE RED DEATH sub-setting, which takes place in an 1890s alternate Earth—think gaslights and ghosts.

GAMMA WORLD's mutants are as wild as ever, but Sword & Sorcery Studios has replaced atomic radiation with bio- and nanotechnology as the primary source of strangeness. This move from fantasy toward grittier real-world science speculation extends throughout the setting. For example, the new rules address the cultural impact of a descent into a technological dark age, including social taboos, twisted history, and the actions of heroes.

Necromancer Games, one of Sword & Sorcery's other studios, goes for pure nostalgia by publishing D&D adventures and supplements under the motto "3rd Edition Rules, 1st Edition Feel." The old-school goodness extends from the text to the covers, inset art, and module numbers in the upper left corners. Necromancer developer Bill Webb says "We want to be the VW Bug: modern appeal with an obvious link to the past."

For more on Sword & Sorcery Studios's current projects and their numerous product lines, check out **swordsorcery.com**. –M.F.

DUNGEON THIS MONTH

DUNGEON #119

The World of D&D Poster Map (2 of 4)

The second of four giant poster maps by all-star cartographer Robert Lazaretti reveals the treacherous Crystalmist Mountains, the forlorn Sea of Dust, the pirate isles of the Azure Sea, and much, much more.

Unfamiliar Territory

by Chris West

When his wizard master's tower collapsed ages ago, the imp Hezzrack found himself trapped in the basement for a long, long time. After spending many years playing chess with himself and arranging macabre passion plays with animated skeletons, he finally found a way to escape. Unfortunately, that escape required signing a contract with a particularly unpleasant goblin adept. If only a group of adventurers were to take care of the goblin and release him completely! A D&D adventure for 3rd-level characters.

Wrath of the Abyss

by Greg A. Vaughan

A new conspiracy against shadow-haunted Istivin has been laid bare! The drow have returned, and worse, they have captured the only living creature who possibly knows how to destroy the parasitic Abyssal entity that taints the city's alleys and foundations. What ties do these dark elves have to the notorious Vault of the Drow? And what is the creature that haunts the city above? Find out in the exciting conclusion to the Istivin: City of Shadows Campaign Arc! A D&D adventure for 12th-level characters.

Tomb of Aknar Ratalla

by Jack Flynn

Long ago, Aknar Ratalla's reign of ruin was ended by an unlikely alliance of the forces of law. However, they were unable to destroy his most dangerous weapons and relics, instead hiding them in a remote tomb. For many centuries, the tomb stood unspoiled... but now, an invading band of adventurers must become its guardians. A D&D adventure for 14th-level characters.

D&D ON DEMAND

With more than 100 big-name games available and lots more on the way, Comcast Games on Demand (**comcast.net/gamesondemand**) is shaping up to be the next big thing in PC gaming. At $14.95 per month, you gain essentially unlimited access to dozens of games, from *Roller Coaster Tycoon 2* to *Majesty*, and from *Pool of Radiance* to *Neverwinter Nights* (*Shadows of Undrentide*, even!). Why deal with scratched disks, coffee-stained manuals, and multi-gig installations when you can sit back and let your high-speed internet connection do all the work?

The only real problem inherent to the system is that players are at the mercy of their ISPs. Add to that a download required for each separate game (from 100 to 300 MB, usually), and you get a fairly hefty investment of time and hard drive space. However, since it's nowhere near the investment needed to buy up and install even a few of these games from disc, Comcast is betting that the new system will catch on with net-savvy gamers and spread from there. Soon we'll all be shooting with *Ghost Recon*, scheming with *Civilization III*, or goobing-out with *Magic: the Gathering: Battlegrounds* without cluttering our battlefields with unruly (if eye-catching) packaging. We're one step closer to *The Matrix*. –R.L.

DUNGEON MASTER

Hirst Arts Fantasy Architecture, **hirstarts.com**, produces a line of Castlemolds, silicone rubber molds that you buy and fill with plaster of Paris to create intricately detailed dungeon and castle bits. Whether a dungeon, castle, inn, or tomb for your favorite party of PCs to explore, these sets allow you to show off your architectural skills, creating any dungeon or building you can imagine. Impatient gamers should be wary, though. The sets do require you to bake, paint, and glue each piece individually, but the end result is often well worth the time. Whether you use minis in your D&D games or play miniatures games, these sets should give you exciting locales to explore for years—and games—to come. –D.D.

DEVIL MAY CRY 3

Swords, fists, bullets... it takes a lot to kill a demon these days. For perspective, check out *Devil May Cry*, which introduced the half-demon hero Dante to the world. The new prequel, *Devil May Cry 3*, looks and plays better than its predecessor, with tons of old fashioned demon-slaying carnage and brutal weaponry, from our anti-hero's ancestral magic sword to (wait for it) a tricked-out guitar. With new characters, multiple fighting styles, and more back-story than a George Lucas production, *Devil May Cry 3* offers players all the action, inspiration, dark magic, and devil-killing carnage you can get outside of your own D&D game. –R.L.

ANIME SUPER CHESS

Manufactured by toy and video game giant Bandai, *Navia Dratp* is a two-player collectible miniatures game that combines elements of chess with a healthy dose of fantasy. Played on a checkerboard playmat (that's included in every starter set), each player maneuvers *Gulled* (pawns), powerful warrior *Maseitai*, and a *Navia* (king) against an opponent's pieces. With dozens of intriguing, anime-styled monsters, a compelling storyline, and extraordinarily detailed miniatures, Navia Dratp is the perfect game for gamers who like a little D&D in their strategy games, or who saw *Harry Potter* and thought wizard's chess looked cool. *Maseitai* also make awesome minis and setting decoration. Learn more about Navia Dratp at **naviadratp.com**. –D.D.

RPGA UPDATE

by Ian Richards
RPGA Program Manager

A couple of years ago we decided to make WINTER FANTASY our "here's what Wizards of the Coast and the RPGA will be doing next year" show in addition to being the RPGA's own gaming show. So I wanted to talk about some facts about last year and then, in the vein of WINTER FANTASY, talk about what's in store with some 2005 initiatives.

2004 saw the number of active RPGA members—those who play at least one game with us—go up by almost 40 percent. At the same time, the number of sanctioned RPGA events, of all categories, went up by more than 60 percent. Which means more people are more active in the RPGA than ever before. Today, an RPGA-sanctioned event can be your own home game. Whether just six players and a GM or a 100-table convention, no matter the attendance level, we count it as an event. Thus, in 2004 we saw a succession of the largest event sanctioning months in RPGA history, with the following months beating them with no sign of slowing down! This is a testament to all the writers and GMs globally, who write and provide play opportunities. With the launch of the new EBERRON campaign at WINTER FANTASY we're set to grow even further in the coming months.

With all this great news about 2004 what more can we do to enhance the RPGA experience for players and GMs in 2005? Well, there's nothing better than free stuff—unless it's more free stuff, right? So we'll be continuing and adding initiatives to the D&D Rewards program.

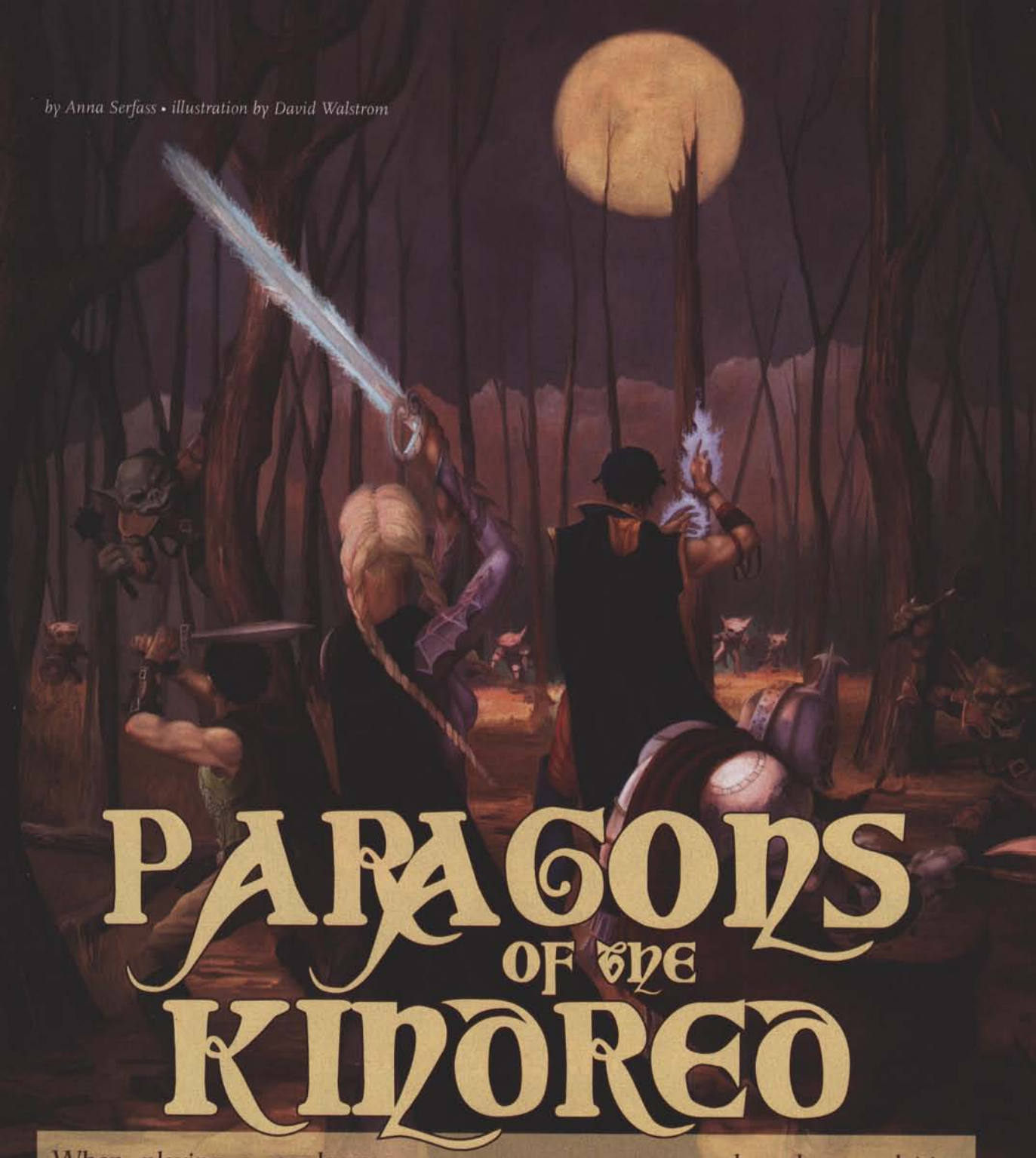
First, every two weeks starting in early 2005, we will be sending registered members a small E'zine. This electronic publication will have interesting articles about the RPGA and all the games we support, event and show information for both local and international play, and important links to make finding archived materials, related reading, and product information easier to find. Designed not to compete with anything we already do on the D&D website or through the hallowed pages of *DRAGON* and *DUNGEON* magazines, this publication will support and enhance information flow for those who are invested in the RPGA and D&D. This service will be totally free but only available to D&D Rewards members with confirmed email addresses.

Secondly, we'll be increasing availability of rewards cards. With the last mailing of D&D Rewards in the fall of 2004 we tripled the number of D&D Campaign cards players earn. Instead of just one per 20 points earned in a given period we increased it to three. This will continue from now on and was prompted by player feedback that it was too hard to get certain cards or gather complete sets.

Finally a change to the GM Rewards program comes directly from feedback from GMs themselves. Many GMs rightly informed us that they get to play some games but spend a lot more time running the games that created that fantastic growth we talked about earlier. By doing this, they get very few D&D Campaign cards and, even at the increased rate, are unlikely to get a full set or even half a set. Therefore, with the Spring Mailing in 2005, the GM reward at 60 points will be a complete set of the D&D Campaign cards. This replaces the single box of D&D Miniatures, which is still available for 100 points and every 40 points above that. So now would be a good time to update your information or sign up for D&D Rewards online at **rpga.com**.

As you can see, we have a few nice new enhancements to build into the D&D Rewards program and with the launch of the new EBERRON *Mark of Heroes* campaign, 2005 is likely to continue where 2004 left off! We here at the RPGA are gearing up for another record year of great games, great opportunities and roleplaying tales that will still be talked about when D&D celebrates its 50th anniversary!

by Anna Serfass • illustration by David Walstrom



PARAGONS OF THE KINDRED

Prestige Classes for Nonhuman Clerics

When playing a nonhuman cleric, the race you choose deeply affects the attitudes and outlooks of your character. The nonhuman deities are as different from one another as the races who worship them. The common, good nonhuman deities (Corellon Larethian, Garl Glittergold, Moradin, and Yondalla) have their chosen clergy, just like other deities. These elite clerics follow paths set for them that best emulate the ideals of their deities and their race.

Chimeric Champion of Garl Glittergold

Chimeric champions epitomize gnome ingenuity and trickery. They specialize in illusion and the art of item creation. Such gnomes are usually fun-loving tricksters with active imaginations. Believing that the world is only what you make of it, they spread their arts among the gnome community and to others they consider deserving.

Chimeric champions are most often clerics or multiclassed cleric/bards, cleric/sorcerers, or cleric/wizards (often cleric/illusionists). Druids and rangers are rarely attracted to this prestige class, lacking the necessary resources to focus on alchemy and item creation. Other classes almost never follow this path.

NPC chimeric champions are extremely devoted to preserving gnome ways of life. They protect their communities with their magic and take it upon themselves to keep the mood light and morale high. They are usually the first to meet new visitors to the community.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the chimeric champion of Garl Glittergold prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Chimeric champions gain no new proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Spells per Day: Whenever a chimeric champion level is gained, the character gains new spells per day as if she had also gained a level in a divine spellcasting class she belonged to before adding the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of turning or rebuking undead, improved animal companions, and so on). This essentially means that she adds the level of chimeric champion to the level of whatever divine spellcasting class the character has, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly. If the character had more than one divine spellcasting class before she became a chimeric champion, she must decide to which class she adds each level of chimeric champion for the purpose of determining spells per day.

Sense Illusion (Ex): A chimeric champion is extraordinarily sensitive to the presence of illusion magic. She is entitled to an immediate Will save merely by coming within 10 feet of any illusion (figment) spell or effect if the spell allows a saving throw. She is not required to study or interact with it. If the chimeric champion fails this save, she receives another save when studying or interacting with the figment as normal.

Scribe Illusion (Su): A chimeric champion can create scrolls as if she had access to all arcane spells from the illusion school. Any spell scribed in this way can be of a spell level up to one level lower than the maximum divine spell level she can cast. A chimeric champion does not have to prepare the spell to scribe the scroll. Instead, she must leave one spell slot (of the appropriate level) open when scribing a scroll not on her spell list. She must still provide all the normal material components or focuses if needed. Any scroll made in this way is usable by the chimeric champion as if the spell was on her spell list. For example, a 7th-level cleric/1st-level chimeric champion casts spells as an 8th-level cleric. She is capable of casting 4th-level spells, so she can scribe any one arcane illusion spell of 3rd level or lower.

Brew Illusion (Su): Beginning at 3rd level, a chimeric champion can create potions as if she had access to all arcane spells from the illusion school. Any potion brewed in this way can be of a spell level up to one level lower than the maximum divine spell level she can cast. A chimeric champion does not have to prepare the spell to brew the potion. Instead, she must leave one spell slot (of the appropriate level) open when brewing a potion not on her spell list. She must still provide all the normal material components or focuses if needed. For example, a 7th-level cleric/3rd-level chimeric champion casts spells as a 10th-level cleric. She is capable of casting 5th-level or lower spells, so she can brew a potion from one arcane illusion spell of 4th level or lower.

Boon of Illusion (Sp): Starting at 5th level, a chimeric champion becomes so familiar with illusion magic that she gains the ability to cast an arcane spell of the illusion school once per day as a spell-like ability. Upon reaching 5th level, the champion selects one 1st-level arcane illusion spell to gain as a spell-like ability. Once this spell is selected, the choice cannot be changed. Note that this spell selection does not take

Hit Die: d8

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a chimeric champion of Garl Glittergold, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Gnome.

Patron Deity: Garl Glittergold.

Base Will Save: +5.

Skills: Craft (alchemy) 3 ranks, Knowledge (arcana) 10 ranks.

Feats: Brew Potion, Scribe Scroll.

Spells: Able to cast 3rd-level or higher divine spells.

CLASS SKILLS

The chimeric champion of Garl Glittergold's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int). See chapter 4 of the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CHIMERIC CHAMPION OF GARL GLITTERGOLD

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Sense illusion, scribe illusion	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Brew illusion	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Boon of illusion	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
6th	+4	+5	+2	+5	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
7th	+5	+5	+2	+5	Boon of illusion	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
8th	+6	+6	+2	+6	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
9th	+6	+6	+3	+6	Boon of illusion, imbue illusion	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
10th	+7	+7	+3	+7	Shadow axe of Glittergold	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class

up any of the chimeric champion's existing spell slots.

At 7th level, the chimeric champion's powers of illusion grow stronger, as she gains access to more powerful illusion magic. She now selects an additional 1st-level arcane illusion spell to gain as a spell-like ability. In addition, the champion may also select one arcane illusion spell of 2nd level and add it to her list of spell-like abilities. She can use these three spell-like abilities each once per day.

Finally, at 9th level, the chimeric champion's knowledge of illusion magic reaches its peak. She chooses an additional 2nd-level arcane illusion spell to cast as a spell-like ability, and she also chooses one 3rd-level arcane illusion spell to cast as a spell-like ability. Each of these new abilities can be used once per day.

Each of these spell-like abilities is used as if by a caster of the chimeric champion's character level. The save DC for any of these spell-like abilities is 10 + the chimeric champion's class level + Cha modifier.

Imbue Illusion (Su): Beginning at 9th level, a chimeric champion can create magic items of any type for which she has the appropriate item creation feat that require arcane spells from the illusion school. She can create an item that requires a spell up to one level lower than the maximum divine spell level she can cast. She must meet all other requirements for the item. Any item made in this way requiring spell trigger activation is usable by the chimeric champion as if the spell was on her spell list. For example, a 7th-level cleric/9th-level chimeric champion casts spells as a 16th-level cleric. She is capable of casting 8th or lower-level spells, so she can use any one arcane illusion spell of 7th or lower level that she does not ordinarily have access to for the purpose of creating a magic item.

Although the spell chosen comes from the arcane spell list, items that generate spell effects (such as wands) are considered to produce divine magic.

Shadow Axe of Glittergold (Sp): At 10th level, the chimeric champion can summon a glowing, floating battleaxe to fight for her twice per day as a standard action. This axe remains in existence for 10 rounds once summoned. The axe acts as a *Mordenkainen's sword* spell except it takes the shape of a battleaxe composed of pure force. Also, the axe's attack bonus is equal to the chimeric champion's caster level + her Wisdom modifier (as opposed to her Intelligence or Charisma modifier), with the additional +3 enhancement bonus described in the *Mordenkainen's sword* spell. The axe deals 4d6+3 points of force damage, with a threat range of 20 and a critical multiplier of ×3.

The shadow axe is not entirely like *Mordenkainen's sword*, however. It is actually a shadow effect. A creature struck by the battleaxe can make a Will save (DC 10 + the champion's class level + her Wisdom modifier) to disbelieve the effect. Success indicates the target of the axe's attack takes only half damage.

Itinerant Warder of Yondalla

Itinerant warders of Yondalla support their communities, dedicating themselves completely to those they consider family. They are happiest traveling with their clan, whom they are committed to protecting. Those who journey to experience the world always seek out an appropriate group of adventuring companions. An itinerant warder fits in with any company and is frequently a beloved member of a group. Anyone who tries to harm one commonly faces a gang of very angry halflings or adventurers.

Itinerant warders most commonly begin as single-classed clerics, although occasionally rangers and cleric/rogues are drawn to this class. Others rarely follow the path of the itinerant warder.

NPC itinerant warders are devoted to their communities, whether a halfling clan or a group of adventurers. They sacrifice individual power for the good of all, believing that strength is found in unity.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the itinerant warder of Yondalla prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Itinerant warders gain no new proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Spells per Day: At 2nd level, and every even level thereafter, an itinerant warder gains new spells per day as if she had also gained a level in a divine spellcasting class she belonged to before adding the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of turning or rebuking undead, improved animal companions, and so on). This essentially means that she adds half the level of itinerant warder to the level of whatever divine spellcasting class the character has, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly. If the character had more than one divine spellcasting class before she became an itinerant warder, she must decide to which class she adds each even-numbered level of itinerant warder for the purpose of determining spells per day.

Comforts of Home (Su): An itinerant warder can sense the location of the nearest nourishment consisting of berries, fruit, mushrooms, and small game animals within 1 mile. In the wilderness, she knows in which direction food or water lies and whether it is safe to eat or drink. In towns and cities, the itinerant warder can find safe taverns that have good food. Using either of these abilities takes 10 minutes.

In addition, she can automatically sense if food or drink within 10 feet is dangerous, but she does not learn specifically why the food is dangerous. She must be able to see and smell the food for this ability to work. For example, she can tell that a stew would be harmful if eaten, but can't say whether the meat is rotten or the food has been poisoned.

Evasion (Ex): If an itinerant warder makes a successful Reflex save against an attack that normally deals half damage on a successful save, she instead takes no damage. Evasion can only be used if the itinerant warder is wearing light armor or no armor. A helpless itinerant warder (such as one who is unconscious or paralyzed) does not gain the benefits of evasion.

Uncanny Dodge (Ex): At 2nd level, an itinerant warder gains the ability to react to danger before her senses would normally allow her to do so. She retains her Dexterity bonus to AC (if any) even if she is caught flat-footed or struck by an invisible attacker. However, she still loses her Dexterity bonus to AC if immobilized.

If the itinerant warder already has uncanny dodge from a different class, she automatically gains improved uncanny dodge instead.

Cast the First Stone (Ex): Beginning at 3rd level, an itinerant warder gains further ability to react to danger before her senses would normally allow it. Any time she is able to act in the surprise round, she gains a +4 bonus on her initiative roll.

Luck of the Draw (Ex): At 4th level, an itinerant warder gains the ability to affect her own and others' luck. Once per day, as a free action, the itinerant warder or one of her allies may reroll one roll that character just made,

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become an itinerant warder of Yondalla, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Halfling.
Patron Deity: Yondalla.
Base Will Save: +5.
Skills: Diplomacy 10 ranks, Tumble 4 ranks.
Feats: Dodge, Mobility.
Spells: Able to cast divine spells.

CLASS SKILLS

Hit Die: d6

The itinerant warder of Yondalla's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Bluff (Cha), Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Hide (Dex), Knowledge (local) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Listen (Wis), Move Silently (Dex), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), Sense Motive (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), Spot (Wis), and Tumble (Dex). See chapter 4 of the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 4 + Int modifier.

ITINERANT WARDER OF YONDALLA

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+0	+2	+2	Comforts of home, evasion	—
2nd	+1	+0	+3	+3	Uncanny dodge	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
3rd	+2	+1	+3	+3	Cast the first stone	—
4th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Luck of the draw	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
5th	+3	+1	+4	+4	Stand firm	—
6th	+4	+2	+5	+5	Opportunity knocks	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
7th	+5	+2	+5	+5	Party dynamics	—
8th	+6	+2	+6	+6	Inconspicuous aura	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
9th	+6	+3	+6	+6	Defensive roll	—
10th	+7	+3	+7	+7	Spell throwing	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class

before the DM declares whether the roll results in success or failure. The character must take the result of this second roll, even if it is worse than the original. The iterant warder chooses when this ability is used and may chose to do so even when not her turn.

Stand Firm (Ex): Beginning at 5th level, an itinerant warder has gained such a self-confident, do-or-die attitude that she inspires her allies. All allies within 20 feet gain a +2 morale bonus on saving throws against fear effects.

Opportunity Knocks (Ex): At 6th level, an itinerant warder gains the ability to react to openings in combat. Once per round the itinerant warder can make a ranged attack against an opponent that has just been struck for damage in melee by another character. This attack counts as an attack of opportunity for that round. An itinerant warder cannot use this ability more than once per round, even if she has the Combat Reflexes feat.

Party Dynamics (Ex): By 7th level an itinerant warder has gained such familiarity with her party that she has a preternatural sense for her allies' movements. The itinerant warder counts as flanking when both she and an ally are threatening the same creature, no matter their position. The itinerant warder cannot focus on the actions of more than one ally at a time and can only flank one creature using this ability. The itinerant warder must have fought with an ally in at least ten battles to use this ability with that character.

Inconspicuous Aura (Su): At 8th level, an itinerant warder can make herself look so small and helpless that her opponents ignore her in favor of other targets. This ability functions exactly like the *sanctuary* spell cast by a spellcaster of the itinerant warder's class level. The Will save DC to resist this effect is 10 + 1/2 the itinerant warder's class level + the itinerant warder's Charisma bonus. The itinerant warder can use this ability three times per day as a free action.

Defensive Roll (Ex): Beginning at 9th level, an itinerant warder can roll with a potentially lethal blow to take less damage than she otherwise would. Once per day, when she would be reduced to 0 or fewer hit points by damage in combat (from a weapon or blow, not a spell or special ability), she can attempt to roll with the damage. To use this ability, she must make a Reflex save (DC equals damage dealt). If the save succeeds, the itinerant warder takes only half damage from the blow; if it fails, she takes full damage. She must be aware of the attack and able to react to it in order to execute her defensive roll—if she is denied her Dexterity bonus to AC, she can't use this ability.

Spell Throwing (Su): At 10th level, an itinerant warder takes the halfling mastery of throwing weapons to an extreme. She gains the ability to "throw" any spell with a range of touch. She can use use touch spells on targets up to 30 feet away. If the spell requires a melee touch attack, the itinerant warder must make a ranged touch attack instead. Failing the touch attack does not mean the itinerant warder still holds the spell's charge; the spell is considered spent whether or not the ranged touch attack succeeds.

Justice Hammer of Moradin

These elite clerics of Moradin bring their god's justice wherever they go. They actively work to order the world in which dwarves must walk by seeking out and stopping injustice and inequity. They are fair-minded but implacable when meting out punishment. Often marked for service at an early age, most justice hammers spend their young lives studying dwarven law along with the rigid rules of the forge. In an oath-swearing ceremony, newly deputized justice hammers are require to recite all the laws of their kindred, at which time they are given the great book of Moradin's law as a badge of office.

Justice hammers of Moradin most often start as clerics, paladins, or multiclass cleric/fighters. Rangers sometimes become justice hammers as well. Members of other classes are very rarely attracted to this class.

NPC justice hammers are defenders of dwarven kingdoms who act as counselors and judges. They rarely travel outside of dwarven lands other than to hunt down fugitives from their laws. Judging flight to be an admission of guilt, justice hammers punish offenders immediately once caught.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the justice hammer of Moradin prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Justice hammers gain no new proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Spells per Day: At 2nd level, and every even level thereafter, a justice hammer gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in a divine spellcasting class he belonged to before adding the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of turning or rebuking undead, improved animal companions, and so on). This essentially means that he adds half the level of justice hammer to the level of whatever divine spellcasting class the character has, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly. If the character had more than one divine spellcasting class before he became a justice hammer, he must decide to which class he adds each even-numbered level of justice hammer for the purpose of determining spells per day.

Mark of War (Ex): A justice hammer gains access to the War domain. He gains the granted power associated with the domain and can choose the listed spells as domain spells.

Runic Hammer (Su): Whenever a justice hammer wields a warhammer, it becomes charged with divine power. The weapon glows with a holy rune of fire

Hit Die: d10

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a justice hammer of Moradin, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Dwarf.

Patron Deity: Moradin.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Skills: Concentration 5 ranks, Knowledge (local) 3 ranks.

Feats: Iron Will, Power Attack.

Spells: Able to cast divine spells.

CLASS SKILLS

The justice hammer of Moradin's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Profession (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int). See chapter 4 of the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

JUSTICE HAMMER OF MORADIN

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Mark of war, runic hammer +1d4	—
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Disdain magic	—
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Metal fatigue, runic hammer +1d6	—
6th	+4	+5	+2	+5	—	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
7th	+5	+5	+2	+5	Discern lies	—
8th	+6	+6	+2	+6	Runic hammer +1d8	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
9th	+6	+6	+3	+6	Matter of justice	—
10th	+7	+7	+3	+7	Soul rune	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class

whenever he strikes with it, causing the weapon to deal an extra 1d4 points of fire damage in addition to any other magic bonuses the weapon might have. At 5th level, this bonus damage increases to 1d6 points, and at 8th level it increases to 1d8 points. This ability functions only while the justice hammer is wielding a warhammer and does not function on a warhammer with the flaming or flaming burst abilities.

Disdain Magic (Ex): Beginning at 3rd level, a justice hammer may reroll one saving throw that he just made against a spell or spell-like effect, before the DM declares whether the roll results in success or failure. This ability can be used once per day at 3rd level and twice per day at 7th level and beyond. The justice hammer must take the result of the second roll, even if it is worse than the original.

Metal Fatigue (Su): At 5th level, a justice hammer gains the ability to detect weaknesses in stone and metal objects. Whenever the justice hammer attacks a metal or stone object or makes a sunder attempt against a metal or stone weapon, he treats the hardness of the object or weapon he is attempting to break as one-half normal. Only the justice hammer gains the benefit of this ability. Other creatures that attempt to break or sunder the same object in the same round treat the object as having normal hardness. This ability works against both magic and nonmagic items. Against magic items, apply any enhancement bonus to the item's hardness after halving its base hardness.

Discern Lies (Sp): Beginning at 7th level, a justice hammer can sense lies at will as the *discern lies* spell cast by a spellcaster of the justice hammer's class level. Targets of this ability receive a Will save (DC 10 + the justice hammer's class level + the justice hammer's Charisma modifier).

Matter of Justice (Su): At 9th level, a justice hammer can, as a standard action, project an aura of implacable justice that unsettles his enemies. All opponents within 20 feet of the justice hammer must make a Will save (DC 10 + the justice hammer's class level + the justice hammer's Charisma modifier) or be shaken for 2d4 rounds. Those who succeed are immune to the justice hammer's matter of justice effect for 1 day. Matter of justice is a mind-affecting fear effect and is usable twice per day.

Soul Rune (Sp): At 10th level, a justice hammer can inscribe a rune of justice in the air once per day as a standard action. The rune appears as a tracery of fire in front of the justice hammer, which flies with great accuracy toward its target. The justice hammer must succeed at a ranged touch attack to hit his target. This attack ignores cover. If the touch attack is successful, the soul rune deals 10d6 points of damage and paralyzes the opponent for 1d4 rounds (no saving throw). Creatures immune to paralysis still take the damage. The soul rune has a range of 100 feet + 10 feet per character level.

Mystic Keeper of Corellon Larethian

Corellon Larethian's teachings focus on protecting the elven race through magic and warfare. Mystic keepers uphold these principles, devoting themselves to the preservation and advancement of elven life and art. They often travel the world, defending elves wherever they find them and spreading elven culture where it is needed.

Most mystic keepers of Corellon Larethian begin as clerics or rangers. Paladins are attracted to this class as well, although many find that the devotion required of a paladin is difficult enough. Multiclass cleric/fighters are also common. Cleric/sorcerers and cleric/wizards are rarely mystic keepers, finding the class's focus a bit too martial, but a few can be found among their numbers.

NPC mystic keepers are often travelers and can be found almost anywhere elves flourish. They commonly serve as advisors and magic-wielding warriors within elven realms.

Class Features

All the following are class features of the mystic keeper of Corellon Larethian prestige class.

Weapon and Armor Proficiency: Mystic keepers gain no new proficiency with any weapon or armor.

Spells per Day: At 2nd level, and every even level thereafter, a mystic keeper gains new spells per day as if he had also gained a level in a divine spellcasting class he belonged to before adding the prestige class. He does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained (improved chance of turning or rebuking undead, improved animal companions, and so on). This essentially means that he adds half the level of mystic keeper to the level of whatever divine spellcasting class the character has, then determines spells per day and caster level accordingly. If the character had more than one divine spellcasting class before he became a mystic keeper, he must decide to which class he adds each even-numbered level of mystic keeper for the purpose of determining spells per day.

Sacred Arcana: Upon adopting the mystic keeper class, the character gains access to the Magic domain. The mystic keeper gains the granted power associated with the domain, and can choose spells in that domain as his daily domain spells. A character with the Magic domain can use spell completion and spell trigger items as a wizard of one half his divine caster level.

Intuition (Ex): While wielding a longsword, a mystic keeper gains preternatural defensive skills in combat. At 2nd level, he gains a +1 dodge bonus to Armor Class. This bonus increases to +2 at 6th level and to +3 at 10th level. The mystic keeper loses this dodge bonus when fighting in heavy armor. A condition that causes the mystic keeper to lose his Dexterity bonus to Armor Class also makes him lose this dodge bonus.

Divine Instrument (Su): Beginning at 3rd level, a mystic keeper can imbue his longsword with any prepared spell of 1st level or lower that specifies a target other than you. When the mystic keeper reaches 7th level, the imbued spell

REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a mystic keeper of Corellon Larethian, a character must fulfill all the following criteria.

Race: Elf or half-elf.

Patron Deity: Corellon Larethian.

Base Attack Bonus: +5.

Skills: Concentration 10 ranks, Perform (dance) 2 ranks.

Feats: Still Spell, Weapon Finesse.

Spells: Able to cast divine spells.

CLASS SKILLS

Hit Die: d8

The mystic keeper of Corellon Larethian's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Diplomacy (Cha), Heal (Wis), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Knowledge (religion) (Int), Perform (Cha), Profession (Wis), and Spellcraft (Int). See chapter 4 of the *Player's Handbook* for skill descriptions.

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

MYSTIC KEEPER OF CORELLON LARETHIAN

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+2	+0	+2	Sacred arcana	—
2nd	+1	+3	+0	+3	Intuition +1	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
3rd	+2	+3	+1	+3	Divine instrument	—
4th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Protective ward 1/day	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
5th	+3	+4	+1	+4	Sacred force	—
6th	+4	+5	+2	+5	Intuition +2	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
7th	+5	+5	+2	+5	Divine instrument	—
8th	+6	+6	+2	+6	Protective ward 3/day	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class
9th	+6	+6	+3	+6	Spell reflection	—
10th	+7	+7	+3	+7	Intuition +3	+1 level of existing divine spellcasting class

can be 3rd level or lower. The spell must be cast normally, which provokes an attack of opportunity. Imbuing a weapon requires the expenditure of a spell's normal material components or XP costs, and the longsword must be in hand to be imbued. Thus, a mystic keeper wielding a longsword in one hand and a heavy shield in the other could not activate this ability, just as he could not cast a spell.

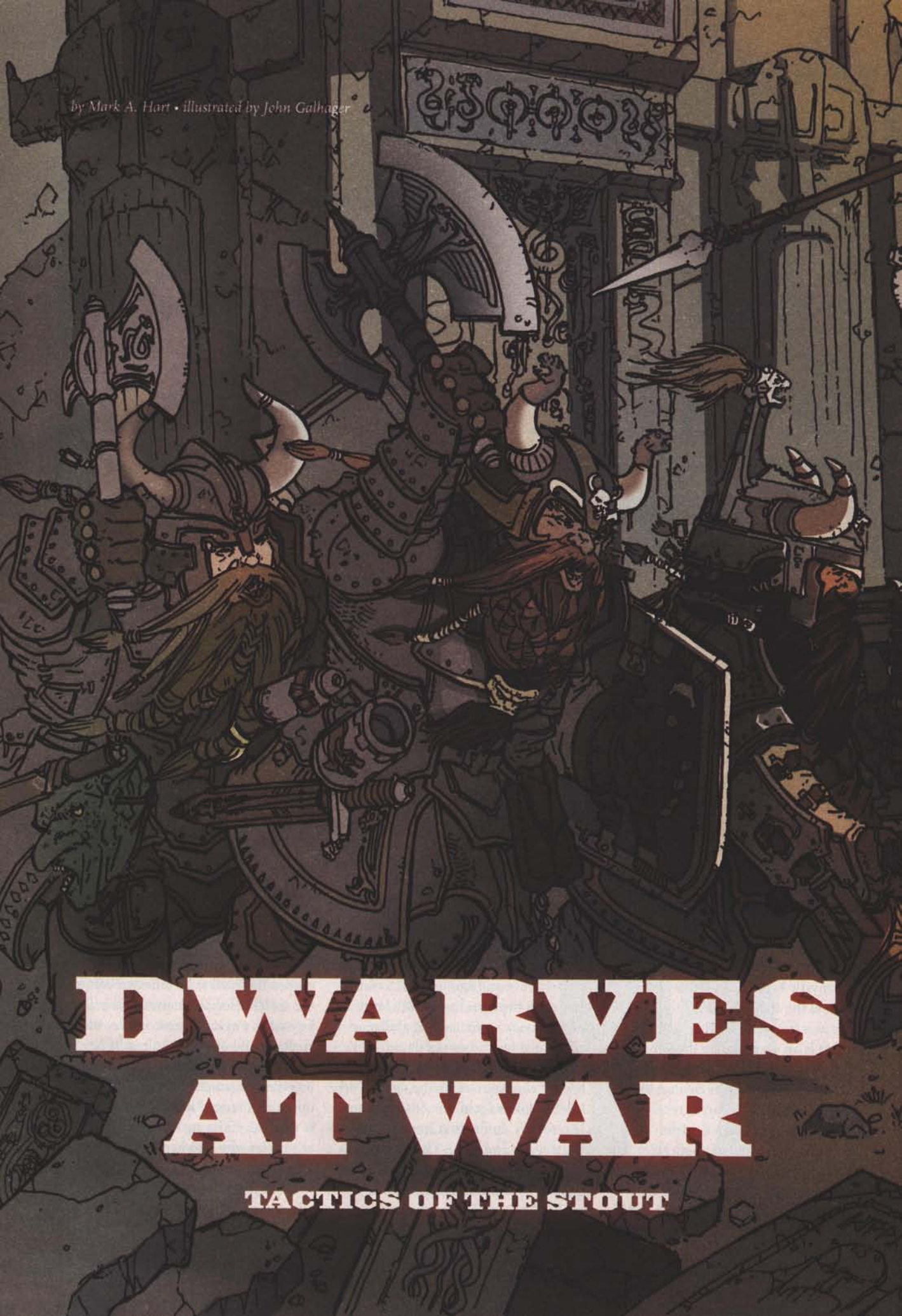
A weapon imbued with a spell can hold the charge for up to 1 hour, after which time it dissipates harmlessly. Any time the mystic keeper deals damage with the imbued weapon, the mystic keeper can immediately expend the spell on the struck creature as a free action. (This special ability is an exception to the general rule that casting a spell from an item takes at least as long as casting that spell normally.) The target receives a saving throw and benefits from spell resistance normally (if applicable). The spell affects only the creature struck, even if it could target multiple creatures. If the attack misses, the spell cannot be discharged. A sword cannot hold more than one spell at a time in this manner. This ability cannot be used on a sword with the spell storing ability.

This ability can be used a number of times per day equal to one-half the mystic keeper's class level.

Protective Ward (Su): At 4th level, a mystic keeper can generate a protective ward for 1 hour as the granted power of the Protection domain, adding his divine spellcaster levels to his mystic keeper level to determine the resistance bonus. If the mystic keeper already has this granted power, he adds his mystic keeper levels as stated above and can use this ability one extra time per day. At 8th level, a mystic keeper can use this ability an additional two times per day.

Sacred Force: At 5th level, a mystic keeper chooses one divine spell of 4th level or lower from one of Corellon Larethian's domains (Chaos, Good, Protection, and War). This becomes a spell-like ability that he can use once per day in addition to his normal spells. The mystic keeper does not use any components when casting the spell, although a spell that costs XP still does so and a spell with a costly material component instead costs him 5 times that amount in XP. This spell cannot be changed once chosen.

Spell Reflection (Su): At 9th level, a mystic keeper can reflect spells with his deity's favored weapon. Once per day as a standard action, when the mystic keeper is wielding a longsword, he can reflect a spell back at the caster. This works much the same as *spell turning*, but the mystic keeper can reflect only one spell, regardless of its level. The mystic keeper must choose the spell to be reflected before the spell's effect is resolved and before he makes a saving throw against the spell, should one be required. If he attempts to reflect a spell that cannot be reflected (an effect or area spell, or one with a range of touch), the attempt is ignored. If the spell is reflected back at a caster who also has a *spell turning* effect, the spell once again rebounds to the mystic keeper who is then affected by the spell normally.



by Mark A. Hart • illustrated by John Gallagher

DWARVES AT WAR

TACTICS OF THE STOUT

War stands among the most revealing facets of mortal existence. Conflict brings out the best and the worst of every race and reveals both its strengths and weaknesses. Each race develops its own methods for waging war to meet its goals, highlight its strengths, and compensate for its weaknesses. For example, orcs and goblins rely on their overwhelming numbers, halflings fight with trickery and guile, and elves use hit-and-run archery raids. For their part, dwarves wage war in their own distinctive style.

Understanding dwarven warfare requires working from general philosophies toward specific tactics. You must understand the three foundations underlying their philosophy of war and the principles that evolved from these philosophies. These principles are designed to accentuate dwarven strengths and overcome deficiencies. From these base ideals, dwarves developed tactics with a focus on small, specialized units as opposed to massed armies. Because dwarven tactics favor small units, they provide an excellent model for adventuring groups to adopt.

The Dwarven Philosophy of War

No intelligent, rational creature seeks war or relishes in carnage. Unfortunately, bloodthirsty monsters driven by conquest, such as orcs and goblins, seem to enjoy violence. Living in proximity to such monsters forces dwarven conclaves to perfect their war craft simply to survive. A three-part philosophy stands at the core of their style of warfare.

The Shorter the Battle, the Better: Because combat inflicts suffering on all sides, the first cornerstone of dwarven philosophy holds that the shorter the fight, the better for all involved. Dwarves possess tremendous patience, but even the most patient dwarf understands that no one profits from a prolonged conflict. This lesson teaches them to fight with decisive force and to commit every resource necessary to win.

Expend Firepower, Not Manpower: The second cornerstone declares that swords, bolts, and armor are easily replaced, whereas dead warriors are not. Dwarves possess limited numbers, a low birth rate, and often find themselves surrounded by countless enemies. The death of a few dwarves might devastate a clan that cannot replace them for decades. Meanwhile, savage humanoids and other monsters possess staggering numbers. These creatures often suffer terrific losses, yet recover within a few years due to high birth rates and fast maturation.

When dwarves fight, they emphasize firepower over manpower. "Better to expend a thousand arrows to kill one orc than lose a single brother" remains a popular saying among many clans. Dwarves emphasize discipline, superior training, and superior equipment to offset the disadvantages that small numbers present. As a result, dwarven units wear the toughest armor and wield the best weapons available to them.

Fight with Unified Purpose: The final cornerstone stresses the importance of unity. The bedrock of dwarven culture consists of duty, honor, loyalty, and the good of the clan over any one individual. Dwarven society emphasizes the community over the individual in several ways, including military service, willingness for self-sacrifice, and dedication to a cause.

Most dwarven societies expect military service from nearly every capable member of the community. As a result, dwarven player characters likely served in the military before their adventuring days. The term of military service varies, but ten years remains standard. Exclusions exist only for those who perform other critical duties, such as clerics and smiths.

Dwarves understand the necessity of self-sacrifice, especially during war. If their clan or kingdom goes to war, most dwarves volunteer to serve in the military or assist with homeland defense. Veterans maintain their combat skills even after retirement in case their people need help; these grizzled warriors form a valuable pool of experienced veterans critical in training new generations of warriors. Civilians dig trenches, construct defenses, tend to the wounded, and assist smiths in creating weapons and armor.

Such determination often surprises outsiders. Elves and humans, typically strong advocates for individuality, find it difficult to understand dwarven resolve and unity of purpose. One observer likened dwarven focus to a "gathering storm, filled with anticipation and potential, waiting to be unleashed like lightning."

Dwarven Combat Principles

Throughout centuries of conflict, the dwarven philosophy of war has led to several general combat principles, four of which are described here. Each provides insight about how dwarves fight and why.

Smaller is Better: Whenever possible, dwarves fight in small, specialized teams consisting of two to four soldiers rather than in massed armies. An army or large unit represents a tempting target for enemy spellcasters and massed missile volleys. Because dwarves often fight underground in cramped quarters, massed units become a liability. Smaller units possess superior mobility and versatility, and they pack a harder punch than their numbers might otherwise suggest. When the terrain if favorable for larger units, dwarves sometimes travel in squads of eleven to twenty, with a few commanders mixed among them. Such larger squads are still smaller than most enemy formations and often break down into smaller teams when needed.

Dwarves often fight in mixed bands of fighters, clerics, wizards, and rogues depending upon the specific mission. Eliminating an enemy leader requires fighters and rogues, while destroying a vital bridge crossing needs the spell power of clerics and wizards. Dwarven strike teams wear the best armor possible, wield masterwork or even magic weapons, and use cooperative tactics. In many ways, these dwarven units resemble adventuring parties.

Never Fight on the Enemy's Terms: This is a universal rule of warfare. Dwarves are masters at choosing when and where they fight. Dwarves never recklessly charge into battle without garnering every possible advantage first. For example, against surface dwellers, dwarves prefer to fight at night when their darkvision gives them an edge against the enemy.

At times, dwarves choose battlefields to counter an opponent's advantages, such as speed or mobility. Because dwarves move at a slower rate than most Medium creatures, they often position themselves so that difficult terrain separates them from the enemy. The dwarves then challenge the enemy to attack, while they prepare to fight on the defensive. If possible, dwarves litter the ground with pit traps, sharpened stakes, caltrops, camouflaged trenches, and pools of flammable oil. When the enemy charges, dwarven crossbowmen and archers wreak havoc with volleys of bolts and arrows. By the time the enemy enters melee, they find themselves wounded, disorganized, and demoralized.

Destroy the Strongest Enemy First: Dwarves know that if they eliminate or humiliate the strongest opponents first, they might win without a protracted battle. For example, if an orc company forms the backbone of a goblin raiding party, the dwarves attempt to bypass the goblins and concentrate on the orcs. Once the orcs die, the goblins likely flee. After all, if the most powerful unit falls, what chance do the weaker ones stand? Such a strategy conveys considerable risk. By attacking the toughest foe first, the dwarves might initially suffer higher casualties and risk expending too much blood and strength early in the fight.

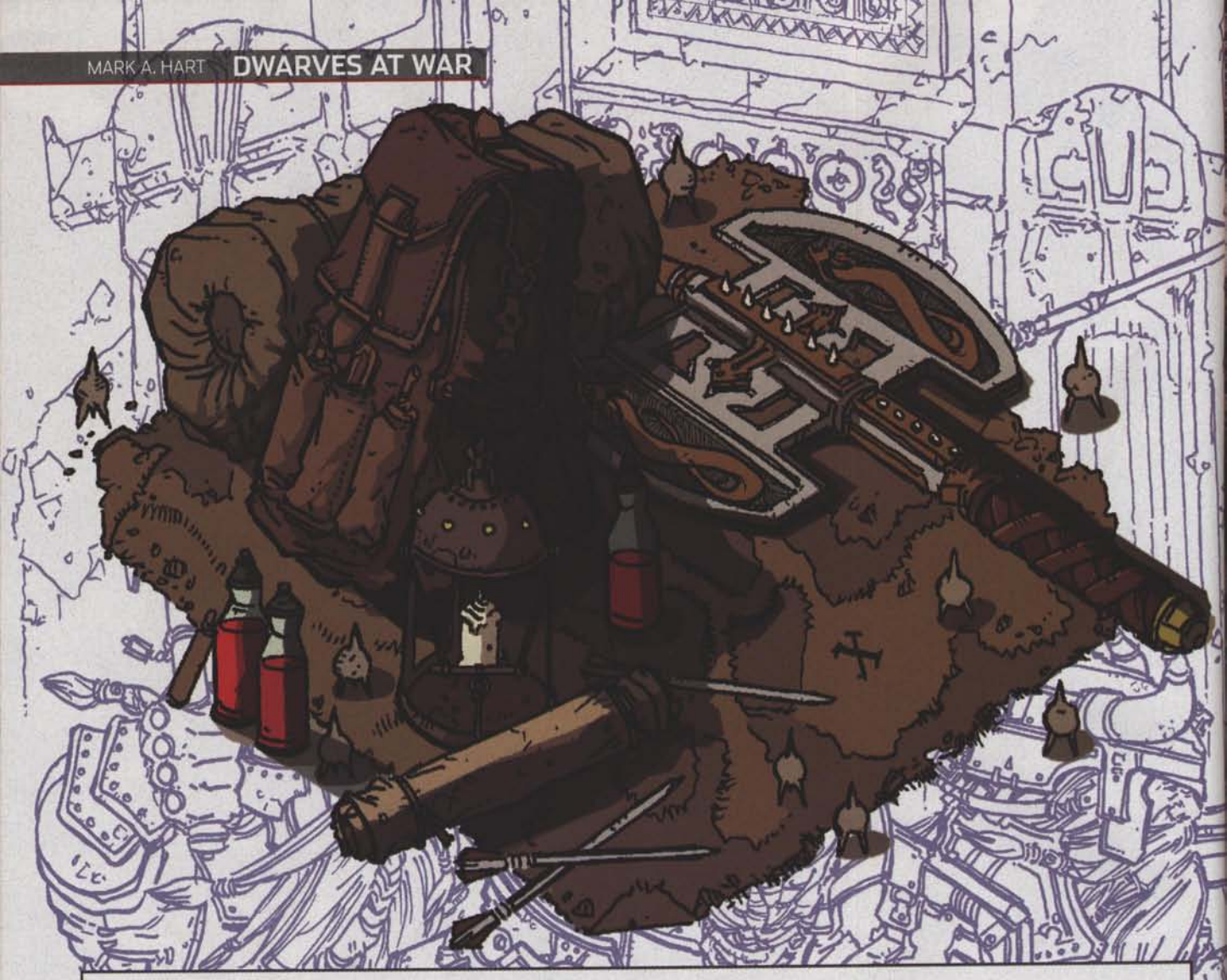
Survive the Fight: In many battles, dwarves find themselves outnumbered by hordes of savage, undisciplined monsters. The wise dwarf paces himself for the entire fight. When he fights a swarm of weaker creatures, he favors a defensive battle. The dwarf might only land one blow for every four attacks his enemies make, but his strike hits hard and his armor turns many hits into mere grazing blows. Weak and inexperienced creatures find it tremendously difficult to wound an armored dwarf.

Unlike many lesser or barbaric races, dwarves also make sure to tend to their wounded. They often slow any retreat to make sure to gather the fallen for healing, proper burial, or even resurrection. Orcs and goblins know no such mercy for their fellows. Their dead and badly wounded litter the battlefield after a fight, left to rot by their callous kindred.

The Dwarven Art of War in Action

What happens when dwarves put their philosophies and maxims to work? What specific tactics do dwarves use in warfare? The following tactics and techniques take advantage of dwarven strengths, such as resistance to poison and spells, or compensate for their weaknesses, such as a slower movement rate compared to other races.

Fight with a Plan: Dwarven strike teams spend considerable time working out different strate-



gies to deal with various situations. Each team member knows his role, and knows everyone else's role as well. When the team encounters a necromancer and his undead minions, for example, some dwarves charge after the wizard, while others attack the undead. Dwarves emphasize group victory over individual heroism or achievement.

Armor is Good: Because dwarves suffer no movement penalty for wearing medium or heavy armor, non-spellcasters wear the best protection possible. Although most dwarves possess average Dexterity, even those more dexterous than average prefer heavy armor at the expense of a maximum Dexterity bonus. Among medium armors, a breastplate offers the best overall combination of maximum protection and Dexterity bonus, while incurring the minimum armor check penalty. Among the heavy armors, full plate provides the best combination. Many dwarves looking to maximize their protection turn to battle plate and mountain plate. See *Races of Stone* for details on these armor types.

Wear a Shield: The shield serves as an essential piece of armor for dwarven warriors. A large shield provides a +2 bonus to Armor Class at the expense of a –2 armor check penalty. In most cases, dwarves favor carrying a shield over wielding a two-handed weapon. If necessary, a shield serves as a second weapon for shield bash attacks. For additional damage, dwarven shields often include a shield spike.

When possible, dwarven squads make use of tower shields. Although the tower shield's encumbrance inflicts a –2 attack penalty, it provides either a +4 armor bonus or total cover when necessary. The tower shield's cover proves especially valuable against ranged attacks, burst spells, and emanation spells. Against archers, dwarves hold up their tower shields for cover and charge. Once they reach the enemy, they drop their shields and engage in melee.

Fight Defensively: When a dwarf fights many enemies, he must pace himself and avoid taking damage for as long as possible. Against large numbers of weaker opponents, a skilled dwarf warrior often fights defensively. Although his attacks suffer a –4 penalty, the +2 AC bonus might make him nearly impervious to attack. A dwarf fighting defensively in full plate armor and with a large shield enjoys an Armor Class of 22; an average kobold or goblin must roll a natural 20 to successfully hit. Of note, the AC bonus from fighting defensively stacks with the bonus provided by the Combat Expertise feat.

Combat Expertise: Many dwarves favor the Combat Expertise feat. Once a character gains a total attack bonus of +5 or more, this feat proves especially useful against numerous weaker opponents with poor attack bonuses or a low Armor Class.

Remember Your Training: One of the first things a young dwarf learns is how to fight against orcs, goblinoids, and giants. Dwarven combat schools teach numerous techniques that give them a bonus when attacking orcs and goblinoids. This bonus is often used to offset the penalties incurred by extra use of the Combat Expertise and Power Attack feats. The same training also teaches dwarves how to avoid the awkward but devestating blows of giants. This bonus helps ensure that dwarves survive an encounter with these hulking brutes.

Lights Out: Against surface dwellers, dwarves prefer to fight in the dark. Dwarves possess darkvision to a range of 60 feet, which provides them a significant edge in total darkness against creatures with normal or low-light vision. In the dark, a creature without darkvision suffers a 50% miss chance, a –2 penalty to AC, loses its Dexterity bonus, moves at half speed, and cannot make attacks of opportunity.

Trapped Terrain: Traps and dangerous natural hazards abound in dungeons. With the stonecunning ability, dwarves often detect such hazards early. Whenever possible, dwarves put these hazards to work against the enemy. If dwarves discover an area with hidden pits or unsafe stone surfaces, they lure opponents into the vicinity. For example, a team of dwarves might bait a group of ogres across a floor littered with pits or through unstable tunnels intent upon bringing them down on their heads.

Dealing with Spells: Against spells and spell-like effects, dwarves gain a +2 bonus on their saving throws. Against spells with a Fortitude save, a dwarf fares even better due to his often high Constitution. Dwarves respect magic, but they often depend on their innate resistance to protect them while battling enemy spellcasters. When spells or spell-like effects appear on the battlefield, dwarves assign their toughest warriors to deal with the caster or creature responsible.

Trip Attacks: Because of inborn dwarven stability, the stout folk sometimes attempt to trip their opponents to gain the upper hand. Although the bonus from dwarven stability does not apply to a dwarf's attempt to trip an opponent, it does apply if the opponent attempts to trip the dwarf in return for an unsuccessful attempt.

Adventurers and Dwarven Tactics

Dwarven combat tactics offer many lessons to adventurers. Indeed, several similarities exist between an adventuring party and a dwarven strike team. For example, teams of dwarven warriors rarely have more than a dozen members. They work alone, often cut off from support and rescue should things go poorly. In addition, most team members wear heavy armor, fight with the best weapons available, and enjoy magical support. Given these similarities, wise adventurers study dwarven methods and learn the tactics involved. To that end, characters should consider the following three points when adapting dwarven tactics.

Know Your Vision: First, most characters lack darkvision. As previously described, creatures without the ability to see suffer severe penalties in the dark. When possible, a party without darkvision should do whatever necessary to eliminate darkness. The party should stock up on *potions of darkvision*, while the party's wizard (or ranger, if of sufficient level) should keep the spell *darkvision* handy along with plenty of other spells that generate light. If the party is capable of functioning in the dark, it might gain considerable benefit against its enemies.

Use Your Speed: Second, although dwarves move slower than other Medium creatures, characters of most other Medium races move 30 feet per round (or faster, in the case of the barbarian and the monk). In adapting dwarven tactics, faster movement provides an added benefit. Faster characters should wear light or no armor to retain their speed. Such characters provide tactical options that dwarves often lack. For example, a monk could bait enemies and lead them into an ambush with little fear of capture.

Get a Dwarf: Finally, sometimes it just takes a dwarf to do the job right. If the party includes a dwarf, it should take advantage of his strengths. For example, the dwarf might be best suited to deal with spellcasters or creatures using poison thanks to his improved saving throws. Lacking a dwarf, adventurers should find ways to replicate dwarven strengths. For instance, characters facing poison attacks should use antitoxin.

Think Like the Stout: Probably the best advice dwarves can offer is to follow their example. Make sure your AC is as high as possible, keep your allies on their feet, and make your enemies pay dearly for every foot of ground and every drop of blood.

by Richard Pocklington • illustrated by Cara Mitten

NOBODY'S PERFECT

New Flaws for Nonhumans

Whether you prefer gruff dwarves, uncouth half-orcs, or haughty elves, arguably no other decision you make when generating a new character is as important as your race. In DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, your racial selection is far more than a cosmetic decision. Dwarves, elves, gnomes, half-elves, half-orcs, halflings, and humans each have distinct advantages. Ability score bonuses, darkvision, and saving throw modifiers are just a few of the many benefits you gain from your choice of race. However, along with the many advantages your choice carries with it, there are limitations as well.

Ability score penalties—suffered by all but humans and half-elves—have traditionally been used to help tailor each character to his role, separating the various races by making some better suited for wizardry, some for subterfuge, and others for melee. The flaws below each target a specific non-human race from the *Player's Handbook*. Each flaw is designed to give you the opportunity to select game-play options that more clearly define your character as a member of your chosen race.

Flaws penalize a character in a specific way. Most of these flaws have obvious roleplaying consequences, but they also have game mechanics penalties. The concept of flaws first appeared in *Unearthed Arcana*, but you don't need that

book to use the flaws presented here. A character may only take up to two flaws, and they must be selected at 1st level. For each flaw you take, your character may select an additional feat. Thus, a 1st-level human character with two flaws may take four feats.

Although designed specifically with nonhumans in mind, any character may select from these flaws if he meets the appropriate prerequisites.

Flaws for Dwarves

Dwarves are famous for their reluctance to back down, often keeping track of who has slighted them in the past. They have a tendency toward fearlessness when they take on foes far beyond their size. While these attributes are held in high esteem by some, in some situations they are quite frustrating.

Glory-Hound {Flaw}

You have an insatiable desire for glorious combat, fighting recklessly to prove yourself.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Effect: You suffer a –2 penalty to AC during combat until you drop an opponent. This penalty does not apply if the combat is against a single opponent.

Grudge Keeper {Flaw}

You have an overpowering need for vengeance and have difficulty letting go of grudges.

Effect: If you are damaged in combat, you suffer a –2 penalty on attacks rolls, skill checks, saving throws, and ability checks until you damage the foe who caused you harm. This penalty does not apply if you cannot discern the source of the damage. This penalty disappears when the combat ends.

Implacable {Flaw}

You refuse to retreat from even the most deadly of confrontations.

Prerequisite: Base attack bonus +1.

Effect: If you move out of melee combat for any reason, you suffer a –2 penalty on all attack rolls, skill checks, and saving throws for 1 hour.

Stubby Fingers {Flaw}

You have short stubby fingers, which are not well-suited for grasping.

Prerequisite: Dwarf, gnome, or halfling.

Effect: You suffer a –4 penalty on all attack rolls made when you use a light or one-handed weapon (natural weapons and unarmed attacks do not incur this penalty). In addition, you suffer a –4 penalty on all Disable Device, Open Lock, Sleight of Hand, and Use Rope checks.

Flaws for Elves

While some elves appreciate fine dwarven craftsmanship, others look disdainfully at any object not made by their own kind. Such snobbery is common among a race that openly disdains most aspects of other cultures. Generations of such a near-sighted lifestyle have taken their toll on some elves, who sometimes seem to be better suited to high court drama than the rough and tumble world faced by most adventurers.

Elven Pride of Arms {Flaw}

You only consider those weapons designed specifically for use by the noblest of elves to be fit to wield. Using any other object as a weapon is beneath your dignity.

Prerequisite: Elven blood.

Effect: You suffer a –4 penalty on attack rolls when using a weapon other than a longsword, rapier, or bow (long, short, or composite). Attacks made while fighting unarmed, touch attacks (including ranged touch attacks), or attacks made with natural weaponry also incur this penalty.

Frail {Flaw}

You become fatigued when your body is assaulted by poison or magic.

Prerequisite: Constitution 11 or lower.

Effect: Whenever you fail a Fortitude save, you become fatigued, in addition to any other effects you might suffer. This condition lasts until you get 8 hours of complete rest. This flaw applies only once to any given source that requires a Fortitude save. Failing a Fortitude save while fatigued causes you to become exhausted.

Fussy {Flaw}

You are uncomfortable ingesting anything but a small range of preferred foods and drinks.

Effect: You become sickened (no saving throw allowed) upon ingestion of any sort of potion for the duration of its effect. Potions with an instantaneous duration cause you to be sickened for a period of time equal to the potion's caster level in minutes. You also suffer a –4 penalty on saving throws made against ingested poisons.

Slow Healing {Flaw}

You do not heal quickly.

Prerequisite: Constitution 13 or lower.

Effect: You do not normally recover hit points or temporary ability damage through natural healing. If you undergo complete bed rest for a full day, you may recover either 1 hit point or 1 point of temporary ability damage. In addition, any conjuration (healing) spell cast upon you works at only half its caster level. For example, a *cure moderate wounds* cast upon you by an 8th-level cleric would only heal 2d8+4 points of damage, instead of 2d8+8 points of damage.

Flaws for Gnomes

You have to hand it to those few brave gnome adventurers who leave their comfortable burrows to head out into the wide world. Some gnomes choose such a life due to their inability to fit in with their native gnome society, while others leave their cozy homes in search of gems or magic. A rare few leave home in search of answers to questions they do not know how to ask.

Arcane Conundrum {Flaw}

You are unable to use your inborn magical abilities.

Prerequisite: Gnome, Cha 10+.

Effect: You may never use any spell-like abilities under any circumstances. In addition, you suffer a –2 penalty on saving throws versus spells of the illusion school.

Curious {Flaw}

You are easily distracted by the sights and sounds around you.

Effect: You suffer a –2 penalty on Listen and Spot checks. You also suffer a –2 penalty on initiative rolls.

Magical Fascination {Flaw}

You have a tendency to become fascinated by spells and elaborate magical effects.

Effect: You suffer a –2 penalty on attack rolls and skill checks when in sight of a visible magical effect with a duration greater than instantaneous (such as a *dancing lights*, *spiritual weapon*, or *wall of fire* spell).

Short Attention Span {Flaw}

You have little patience, causing you to have difficulty concentrating on repetitive tasks.

Effect: You suffer a –2 penalty on all skill checks made to retry an action that you previously failed. This penalty is cumulative, increasing by –2 for every failed attempt. In addition, you may not take 20 on any skill check.

Flaws for Half-Elves

Life is not always easy for those of mixed-blood. Torn by desire, some half-elves seek to live their lives in a free-spirited manner which may not prepare them well for a settled life. Plagued by restless nights and disgusted by their own kind, many half-elves continue to wander in search of a peace they many never find.

Free-Spirited {Flaw}

You seek to live your life freely, unburdened by excessive material possessions.

Prerequisite: Chaotic alignment.

Effect: The weight of any gear you carry is considered double for the purposes of determining your load. For example, a half-elf with a Strength of 10 and 30 pounds of gear is treated as carrying 60 pounds, which is a medium load. In addition, any armor check penalties you have are also doubled (or tripled, in the case of making a Swim check).

Half-Blood Outcast {Flaw}

You despise your nonhuman side.

Prerequisite: Half-elf or half-orc.

Effect: You suffer a –2 penalty on all attack rolls, saving throws, and skill checks when within line of sight of an elf (if you are a half-elf) or an orc (if you are a half-orc).

Insomniac {Flaw}

You have great difficulty achieving a full and restful sleep.

Effect: In order to get a full night of rest you must succeed at a DC 15 Fortitude save. If you are sleeping and a disturbance wakes you during the night, you must make an additional save (at the same DC) to return to sleep. If you fail the Fortitude save you are fatigued when you rise in the morning. If you are fatigued when you try to sleep, you gain a +2 bonus on your save. If you are exhausted, you gain a +6 bonus. Comfortable conditions, such as those found in most inns, grant you a +4 bonus on this save. Poor conditions, such as

sleeping on the ground or in armor, give you a –4 penalty on this save. Even if you sleep poorly, you may prepare arcane spells as normal after 8 hours of fitful rest.

Quarter Elf {Flaw}

Elven blood is not particularly strong in your veins and its features are barely noticeable.

Prerequisite: Half-elf.

Effect: You are not immune to *sleep* spells and do not gain a racial bonus on saving throws against enchantment spells or effects. You are not considered to have elven blood.

Flaws for Half-Orcs

Whether stuck squinting in the bright sun or groping about unable to see well enough to navigate the dark passages inhabited by their nocturnal kin, half-orcs often feel out of place. It might be that this discomfort is a source of their bad tempers and often foolhardy approach to combat. Who fears death if they do not wish to live?

Beady Eyes {Flaw}

You have narrow beady eyes that do not catch the light as well as they should.

Prerequisite: Darkvision.

Effect: You do not have darkvision; instead you possess low-light vision. In addition, you suffer a –2 penalty on all Search and Spot checks.

Bravado {Flaw}

You are rash in combat, refusing to show weakness by falling back from your enemies' blows.

Effect: You may not gain the benefit of any kind of dodge bonuses to your Armor Class. Spells, items, and effects that provide a dodge bonus provide no benefit for you. You cannot use the withdraw action during combat.

Light Sensitivity {Flaw}

Accustomed only to the darker places in the world, your eyes open much wider than normal, making it difficult for you to see in bright light.

Prerequisite: Darkvision.

Effect: You become dazzled in bright sunlight or within the radius of a *daylight* spell. A dazzled creature takes a –1 penalty on attack rolls, Search checks, and Spot checks.

Short Temper {Flaw}

You become angry and flustered under stressful circumstances.

Effect: If you suffer any damage during combat, you must make a DC 15 Will save or become enraged. While enraged you suffer a –2 penalty to your Armor Class and you cannot use any Charisma-, Dexterity-, or Intelligence-based skills (except for Balance, Escape Artist, Intimidate, and Ride), the Concentration skill, or any abilities that require patience or concentration. You cannot cast spells or activate magic items that require a command word, a spell trigger (such as a wand), or spell completion (such as a scroll) to function. You can use any feat you possess except Combat Expertise, item creation feats, and metamagic feats. This enraged state lasts for a number of rounds equal to 3 + your Constitution modifier and cannot be ended prematurely. This penalty stacks with those from the use of the barbarian rage ability, resulting in a –4 AC penalty.

Flaws for Halflings

While all halflings are small, some are so small that their lack of bulk encourages enemies to push them around. Others manage to approach dwarven girth, even if they are no taller than their kindred. In part due to their small size, some halflings are uncomfortable in combat, and even those who become adventurers might choose to engage their foes more cautiously than their larger friends.

Cautious {Flaw}

You are uneasy engaging in behavior that carries a chance of failure.

Effect: You must spend twice as long performing any skill that requires an action. For example, deciphering a page of text would take 2 minutes for you instead of 1, while the Concentration skill is not affected by this flaw as it does not require an action. You also suffer a –2 penalty on initiative checks.

Lightweight {Flaw}

You are light for your size.

Prerequisite: Constitution 13 or lower, you may not be Obese.

Effect: You have half the base weight of a normal character of your race. Height and weight modifiers are added normally. You suffer a –4 penalty when making or resisting bull rushes, grapples, overruns, or trip attacks. You gain no attack bonus when you charge, but you do suffer the –2 Armor Class penalty and take double damage from weapons set against charges you make.

Normal: Characters receive a +2 bonus on attack rolls when charging.

Obese {Flaw}

Your great bulk can sometimes impede your actions.

Prerequisite: Small size, Dexterity 13 or lower, you may not be Lightweight.

Effect: You have double the base weight of a character of your race. Height and weight modifiers are added normally. You lose your +1 bonus to Armor Class and on attack rolls, as well as your +4 bonus on Hide checks. You must pay double the cost for armor but not for any magical enhancements the armor might have. Such armor does not weigh half the normal amount.

Normal: Small characters receive a +1 bonus to Armor Class and on attack rolls, as well as a +4 bonus on Hide checks. Armor for small characters weighs half the normal amount.

Skulker {Flaw}

You are not prepared to stand face to face with your foes.

Effect: You must make a DC 15 Will save or become shaken whenever a foe engages you in melee. This penalty takes effect as soon as an enemy attacks you while you are within its threatened area. You recover from your fear as soon as you are not within an area threatened by foes.

by Jishuo Yang
Illustrated by Eva Widermann

THE FORCE MISSILE MAGE

The spell *magic missile* is one of DUNGEON & DRAGONS's most iconic elements, a favored staple of many arcane spellcasters and an example of raw magical force. Thus, it is no wonder that a cabal of arcane spellcasters focuses their studies on this spell, determined to perfect its casting technique above all others. As these spellcasters obsessively explore *magic missile's* secrets and press its boundaries, every rune and magical symbol of the spell becomes inexorably etched upon their minds. The outcome of such focused study results in the ability to warp the magical energies involved in casting *magic missile*, which leads to the creation of new abilities that augment the spell's effects. Eventually the most devoted researchers come to a new understanding of how magic works, revealing unplumbed depths of power out of the reach of ordinary spellcasters. These inspired spellcasters are known as force missile mages.

Other spellcasters don't understand the force missile mages' dedication to only one spell and frown upon what they see as misguided research. In their reasoning, force missile mages are a discredit to all spellcasters as they limit their understanding of magic to delve into the secrets of what many see as ultimately an insignificant spell. Due to this disdain, force missile mages avoid their more widely studied peers, either pursuing their studies subtly or in seclusion. This has led many to take up the life of a wanderer, traveling from one school or library to the next, learning more about their spell of choice and exploring the world. To some, this is merely a necessity of their studies, but others travel out of a more philosophical interest in embodying the motion and unbounded nature of their magic. Many force missile mages favor wide-open spaces, where they might see their magic soar to its farthest reaches. Thus, many purposefully make their travels through areas rich with plains, savannahs, and deserts, although any wide area of geographical openness appeals to most force missile mages.

Rarely does a spellcaster simply decide to become a force missile mage. Only those with the most peculiar attachment to the *magic missile* spell ever begin researching additional uses for it of their own accord. Rather, many spellcasters hear of such dedicated magical scholars in passing and seek them out to learn their ways. Wizards stand to gain the most from becoming a force missile mage, but some sorcerers and multiclassed clerics also benefit from the class's unique focus. Clerics with access to the Force domain (see *Complete Divine*) often take levels in force missile mage and view their research into one of their faith's most fundamental spells as a religious undertaking.

While many who embark upon the path of the force missile mage claim to do so in order to gain a deeper understanding of magic in general, the majority take on the arduous task in order to become better killers. These arcane snipers hone their skill with *magic missiles* not out of curiosity, but for less scholarly reasons: wealth, revenge, or the power to kill with impunity.

Many of the more scholarly members of the force missile mage community work with argent savants (Complete Arcane, p. 24) to maximize their understanding of force spells in general. While argent savants take a wider view of force magic, the force missile mages keep their studies focused exclusively on unlocking the potentials of *magic missile*. More than once a force missile mage and argent savant have come to magical blows over their differing philosophies.

Most NPC force missile mages intently focus their experiments and resources on their chosen spell, always eager to discover new force spells like *magic missile* or improve on existing ones. They often engross themselves in their research to such a degree that they refuse to tear themselves away from their labs, frequently hiring adventurers to find some obscure spell or magic item. On the other hand, some wandering force missile mages might join characters in their adventures, seeking new opportunities to use their magic to its fullest extent.

FORCE MISSILE MAGE REQUIREMENTS

To qualify to become a force missile mage, a character must fulfill the following criteria.

Skills: Concentration 9 ranks, Spellcraft 9 ranks.

Feat: Combat Casting.

Spells: Ability to cast *magic missile* once per day.

FORCE MISSILE MAGE CLASS SKILLS

HIT DIE D4

The force missile mage's class skills (and the key ability for each skill) are Concentration (Con), Craft (Int), Knowledge (arcana) (Int), Profession (Wis), Spellcraft (Int), and Spot (Wis).

Skill Points at Each Level: 2 + Int modifier.

CLASS FEATURES

All of the following are class features of the force missile mage prestige class.

Weapons and Armor Proficiency: Force missile mages gain no new weapon or armor proficiencies.

Spells per Day/Spells Known: A force missile mage continues training in magic as she gains levels. At each level after 1st, the force missile mage gains new spells per day (and spells known, if applicable) as if she had also gained a level in an spellcasting class she belonged to before she added the prestige class. She does not, however, gain any other benefit a character of that class would have gained. If the character has levels in more than one spellcasting class before becoming a force missile mage, she must decide to which class she adds each level of force missile mage level for the purposes of determining spells per day.

Bonus Missile: At 1st level, a force missile mage gains increased mastery over her spell of choice. Every time she casts *magic missile* an additional missile is created, even if this extra

FORCE MISSILE MAGE ADVANCEMENT

Level	Base Attack Bonus	Fort Save	Ref Save	Will Save	Special	Spells per Day
1st	+0	+0	+0	+2	Bonus missile, still missile	—
2nd	+1	+0	+0	+3	Energy missile, *swift shield*	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
3rd	+1	+1	+1	+3	Overpowering missile	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
4th	+2	+1	+1	+4	*Reflective shield*	+1 level of existing spellcasting class
5th	+2	+1	+1	+4	Bonus missile	+1 level of existing spellcasting class

missile exceeds the normal maximum of five missiles that the spell normally allows. Thus, a 1st-level force missile mage/6th-level wizard creates five *magic missiles*, while a 1st-level force missile mage/8th-level wizard produces six missiles.

At 5th level, the force missile mage benefits from an additional bonus missile. This means that a high-level force missile mage can create up to seven missiles with a single casting of *magic missile*.

Still Missile (Ex): All of your *magic missile* spells do not have a somatic component. You cast *magic missile* as if using the Still Spell feat but without an increase in spell level.

Energy Missile (Ex): A force missile mage becomes intimately attuned to the energies that compose the spell *magic missile* and may alter them in significant ways. Starting at 2nd level, a force missile mage may add either the acid, cold, electricity, or fire descriptor to any *magic missile* she casts.

The type of energy added to the spell is chosen at the time of casting, and you can choose a different type of energy each time you cast *magic missile*. This altered descriptor affects all missiles created by a single casting of *magic missile*. Although still a force spell, any *magic missile* altered in this way deals additional damage against vulnerable creatures and less damage against creatures with related resistances and immunities.

***Swift Shield* (Sp):** A force missile mage realizes the need to defend herself against the *magic missiles* of other spellcasters. A 2nd-level force missile mage can cast *shield* once per day as an immediate action. (An immediate action is like a free action, but only one can be made per round. See the Immediate Action sidebar on page 81 of this issue for a complete description of the immediate action.) This spell is cast in addition to the force missile mage's usual number of spells per day and at the force missile mage's highest caster level.

Overpowering Missile: At 3rd level, the force missile mage's *magic missile* spells become especially potent, breaking through spell resistance more readily than normal. She gains a +2 bonus on caster level checks to overcome a creature's spell resistance with the spell *magic missile*. This benefit only applies to *magic missile* spells she casts.

In addition, a force missile mage's *magic missiles* penetrate *shield* spells and *brooches of shielding* as if they didn't offer protection from the spell.

***Reflective Shield* (Sp):** At 4th level, a force missile mage becomes immune to the spell *magic missile*. For the purposes of being affected by *magic missile*, a force missile mage is constantly treated as being under the effect of the spell *spell turning*, thus reflecting offensive *magic missiles* back at their caster. If that caster is protected by the *shield* spell or a *brooch of shielding* these reflected magic missiles are negated. Missiles reflected back against a caster who also has *spell turning* in effect require the force missile mage to roll on the *spell turning* mishap chart (provided on page 283 of the *Player's Handbook*).

Favored Spells of the Force Missile Mages

Force missile mages have a long and prolific history of using and creating magic similar to their spell of choice. Provided here are several spells likely to appear in the spellbooks of many force missile mages. More information on force spells and the Force domain are provided in *Complete Arcane* and *Complete Divine*, respectively. Those interested in further expanding their repertoire of force spells should also check out "Force Spells" in *Dragon* #323.

Blast of Force

Evocation [Force]
Level: Force 3, Sor/Wiz 3
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Effect: Ray
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Fortitude partial
Spell Resistance: Yes

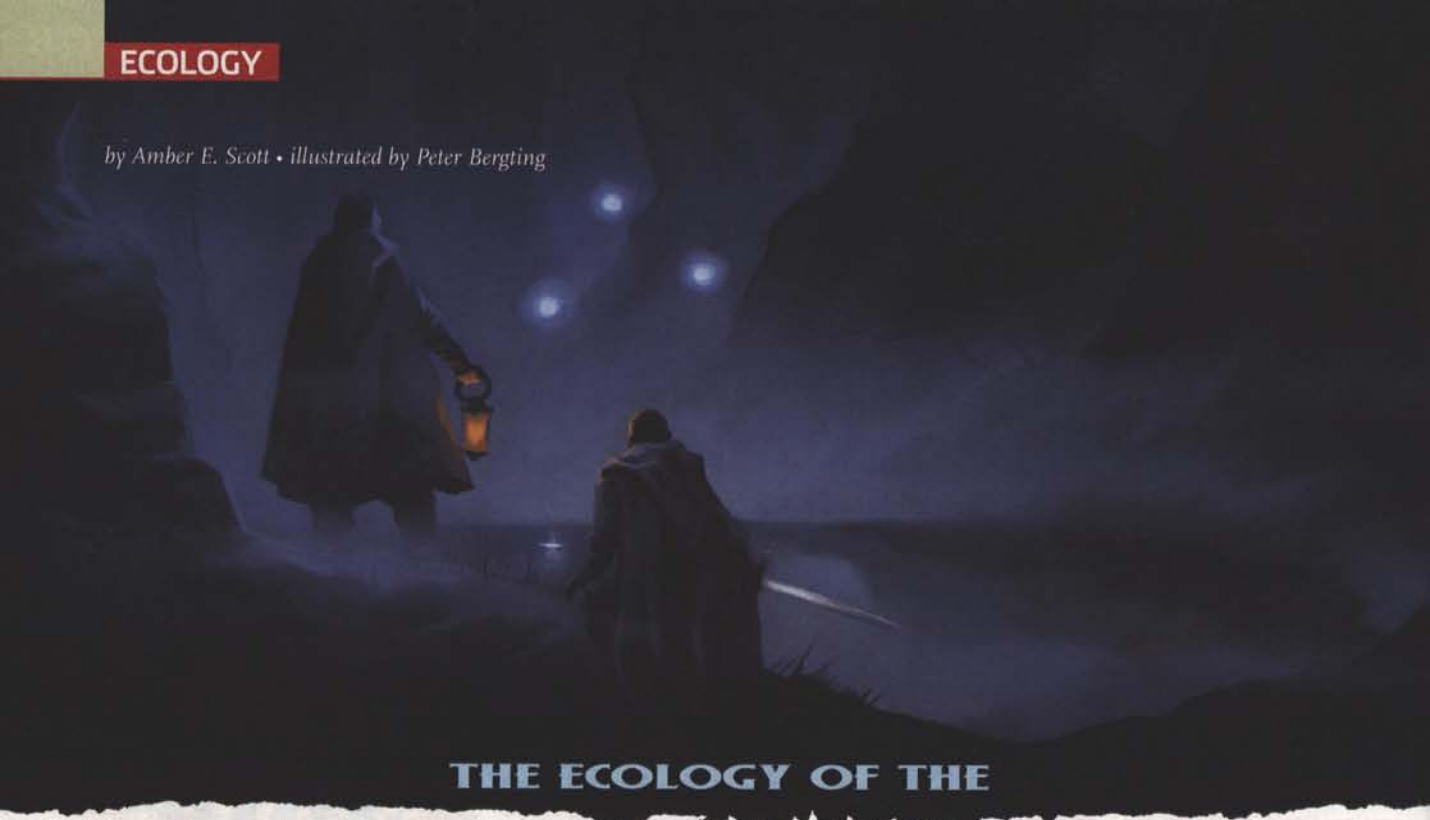
You direct an invisible blast of force at a chosen target. The blast is a ranged touch attack that deals 1d6 points of damage per two caster levels (maximum 5d6). In addition, any target damaged by this spell must succeed at a Fortitude save or be knocked prone (size and stability modifiers apply to the saving throw as if the spell were a bull rush).

Orb of Force

Evocation [Force]
Level: Sor/Wiz 4
Components: V, S
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Effect: One orb of force
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: None
Spell Resistance: No

You create a globe of force 3 inches across, which streaks from your palm toward your target. You must succeed on a ranged touch attack to hit the target. The orb deals a total of 1d6 points of damage per caster level (maximum 10d6).

by Amber E. Scott • illustrated by Peter Bergting



THE ECOLOGY OF THE

Will-o'-Wisp

Most monsters prove frightening because of the things they have—fangs, spikes, and ichor-dripping claws—but will-o'-wisps are terrifying because of the things they lack: empathy, pity, and mercy. Brilliant creatures without a hint of conscience, will-o'-wisps possess voices but choose not to speak. Alien beings without body language or expressions to hint at their unknowable agendas, all that one can truly know of will-o'-wisps is their insatiable hunger for grief, terror, and death.

History of the Will-o'-Wisp

Terrified peasants huddled in dark huts first whispered stories about will-o'-wisps. Struggling to place the unnatural creatures in the natural order of the world, the peasants spun tales about cursed men's spirits doomed to wander the marshes and lure travelers to their deaths. Others say they are evil fairies with tiny lanterns who chuckle to themselves as they tempt followers toward sinkholes or precipices.

One of these stories distinguishes itself from the rest, surfacing repeatedly with only minor variations from region to region. It is the tale of a good woman who married a wicked man—a drunkard and a womanizer with a cruel streak in him. He found no greater pleasure in life than tormenting his young wife, breaking her heart at every opportunity.

His wife, a sweet-tempered and gentle woman, had an infinite capacity for forgiveness and often prayed that her husband would change his wicked ways. When her husband fatally burned down their house one night in a drunken stupor, his wife's piety and devotion granted him a second chance. The gods allowed his spirit to return to earth in the form of a glowing ball of light. If the wicked husband truly repented his evil ways and strove to live a good life, he would then join his wife in the afterlife.

So far the creatures supposedly related to that spirit show no intention of living such lives.

Pious scholars sometimes whisper darker tales, suggesting that will-o'-wisps are the corruptions of the purest souls in existence. These investigators postulate that will-o'-wisps are descended from fallen lantern archons, tempted angels who succumbed to evil. Cast out of the celestial realms for their crimes, these fallen angels have flourished and now wander the Material Plane, indulging in their wicked desires.

Whatever their origins, the most dedicated researchers know will-o'-wisps to be a unique race of living aberrations strongly tied to the most primal forces of wind, lightning, and air. Peasants have many nicknames for these creatures, such as corpse-candles, bobalongs, and spooks. Will-o'-wisps are also often nicknamed after notorious criminals or evildoers of their region; for example, a small village terrorized years ago by a bloodthirsty green hag might call will-o'-wisps "hag lanterns."

Physiology of the Will-o'-Wisp

The alien forms of will-o'-wisps prove particularly confusing to those who seek to destroy them. Their small size—the body of a will-o'-wisp measures only 8 to 12 inches across—combined with the flickering, yellow, blue, green, or white glow that surround them give them an insubstantial, ethereal look as their flames hide their bodies.

A will-o'-wisp's body is not a single solid mass, but rather a cluster of twelve to fifteen gas-filled nodes stuck together in a spherical shape by a transparent, spongy substance. These clear nodes are covered with porous membranes that pulse as the wisp breathes.

Will-o-wisps gain sustenance from two sources: natural gas and emotional energy. A wisp inhales the gas formed by decomposing plant and animal matter and processes it in several ways. It expels some of the gas to propel itself through the air with great precision and speed while absorbing the rest of the gas to fuel its biological functions. Digesting gas in this way produces a by-product that ignites in a heatless light when it comes into contact with air. When a will-o'-wisp exhales, this by-product flares up on the surface of its skin, creating its flickering flames and the faintest smell of sulphur. The wisp's alien digestion process also results in an internal buildup of electricity, which the will-o'-wisp uses as an attack form.

Superstition holds that will-o'-wisps feed off emotional energy, particularly negative emotions, in an almost vampiric manner. Some researchers claim it is not a supernatural process but a biological one; that the wisp actually feeds off the chemicals released through a victim's skin when frightened. These theories are vague and unsupported, but all sages agree that will-o'-wisps gain sustenance from negative emotions in some fashion.

Nodal membranes contain tiny, multipurpose sensory organs, which wisps use to see and hear. A healthy will-o'-wisp grows new nodes at the rate of one a month. These nodes form at the creature's core and push the other nodes outward. Exposed nodal membranes age and tear quickly, and deflated nodes slough off the creature at a rate of about one a month.

A will-o'-wisp that feeds daily for at least six months grows three extra nodes on the outside of its body. It takes a week for these extraneous nodes to mature before they break off and become a new, wholly independent creature. The new wisp develops more nodes over the next two weeks until it matures into an adult-sized wisp. There is no limit to the number of times a will-o'-wisp can reproduce, and it cannot control this process. It only occurs when there is enough sustenance to support reproduction, and thus will-o'-wisp populations naturally control themselves.

Each of a wisp's nodes can think for itself, although they die if separated from the rest of the wisp (except in the case of reproduction). A wisp can think with all its minds at once, which gives it an incredibly advanced intelligence even when it is very young. Also, being that the nodes of a newborn wisp stem from its parent, a young wisp has the same thoughts, memories, and much of the same personality as its progenitor. Thus, will-o'-wisps in the same region are often interrelated and, sharing the same memories, think of themselves as a single creature.

Will-o'-wisps do not seem to have a natural lifespan, but their unique dietary requirements make it easy for them to starve. They must feed on gases once a day and on emotions at least once a week. A solitary will-o'-wisp with constant access to gases but not to emotions breaks down and dies in about three months. A wisp that cannot feed on gases dies in a week, regardless of whether it has access to emotional trauma.

The decomposing materials in a 1-mile-square section of swamp or an average small town graveyard can produce enough gases to sustain a single wisp.

Psychology and Society of the Will-o'-Wisp

A will-o'-wisp sees little difference between a solitary existence and one with related wisps, as they share the same memories, objectives, and similar personalities. In areas capable of supporting a large number of will-o'-wisps strings of 3–4 wisps commonly form, working as insidious, incredibly mobile hunting parties. If a string forms naturally by reproduction, there is no need for the wisps to compete for resources, as reproduction only occurs when there is enough sustenance to support multiple wisps. Naturally forming strings work together to concoct brilliantly evil plans.

If a wisp enters another wisp's territory, neither has any compunctions about killing its rival if necessary. Wisps have no sense of community or racial solidarity and often perceive foreign will-o'-wisps with dissimilar thoughts and memories as a threat. Should its motives prove compatible, an outsider wisp might be welcomed into a local string. Adventurers set upon by a string of wisps consisting of wisps of different minds can try to trick or persuade the wisps to attack one another. Wisps are wise enough to see through amateur attempts to fool them but a talented adventurer might play them against each other. Will-o'-wisps delight in betrayal and backstabbing and could be receptive to such negotiations if they can be suitably convinced. However, it might prove exceptionally difficult for non-will-o'-wisps to tell apart wisps of different parentages, although the color of the light they shed might provide a clue.

Above all else, wisps love causing pain. Years of practice and their immense intelligence hone particularly insidious and creative tactics. The standard will-o'-wisp tactic is to lure a traveler into a dangerous area by pretending to be a guiding light. Adventurers traveling in graveyards or boggy areas must beware and never follow such lights. Tales of these deadly marshlights have spread far through the years, forcing wisps to be more creative with their plans.

Wisps pride themselves on their intelligence and cunning. A wisp might follow a party invisibly for a day or more to evaluate the group's skills and learn its weaknesses. One tale tells of a wisp following a large group of mercenaries for a week as the group traveled through a huge marsh. The wisp chose a victim—a young fighter on his first mission. Every night the wisp flitted into camp invisibly during the young man's watch and killed one of the other mercenaries in his sleep. When the group had lost half its members in this fashion the survivors turned on the watchman and accused him of being the murderer. In vain he tried to defend himself; his companions beating him mercilessly and then hanging him. The wisp, lurking nearby, sucked up the condemned innocent's terror with glee. When the company moved on, the wisp followed and killed one last victim in his sleep. The invisible wisp remained long enough to absorb the horrified emanations from the survivors as they realized they had executed an innocent man and then flew back to its home, satisfied. Adventurers would be wise to set double watches every night when traveling through areas where wisps might live.

On the rare occasions when will-o'-wisps work together the results are truly terrifying. Three strings of wisps once collaborated on a stormy night, clustering together at the top of a rocky cliff and glowing as brightly as possible. Two ships, mistaking the wisps for a lighthouse, were dashed to pieces against the cliffs. Fortunately such collaborations are rare, but good-hearted adventurers who hear tales of wisps working in tandem often seek them out and destroy them for the good of the land.

If necessary, a will-o'-wisp is willing to work with other creatures, but its capricious nature and inherently evil mind make most partnerships short lived. Adventurers who strike deals with wisps should be on guard, as the alien creatures care nothing for keeping promises and enjoy betraying their companions whenever possible.

Since wisps rarely occur in groups larger than four, their society is extremely simple, focusing on survival, reproduction, and causing suffering. Wisp hierarchies, when they exist, make few distinctions between individuals, but give superiority to exceptionally old wisps and those that have executed the most diabolical plans and caused the most terrible deaths—often the same creature.

Will-o'-wisps are unique in that they are one of the few races without religious beliefs. Wisps do not worship any deities and do not have any beliefs about an afterlife. While wisps understand divine magic, they don't believe they have souls. In fact, there have been no recorded instances of wisps returning from the dead by means of divine magic, although whether this is because they have no souls or because the wisps simply do not want to return to life no one can say.

Worshipers of evil gods, particularly chaotic ones who revere slaughter and deception, sometimes see will-o'-wisps as embodiments of their god's doctrine and seek out alliances with them. Wisps are happy to aid such depraved individuals and are more trustworthy when working with evil priests than when dealing with other beings. Wisps understand the dogma of death and destruction and, while they are not worshipers, they eagerly aid devotees of the powers of lies, trickery, and evil.

Some scholars once feared that a race full of such evil and cunning intelligence as will-o'-wisps would grow more powerful, form complex societies, and dominate large areas of the world, much like mind flayers or drow. This has not happened, and scholars are beginning to understand why. Although wisps are keenly intelligent, they possess no extremities or telekinetic powers. They cannot use tools, manipulate items, or construct lairs or fortresses. Wisps might learn tactics and hone their skills, but they are doomed to remain static as long as they stay trapped in their current forms. Their society will never develop further, a reality which frustrates the wisps and drives them to commit ever greater acts of cruelty and depredation. Their reputations as sadistic monsters are all they have.

WILL-O'-WISP KNOWLEDGE

The following table shows the results of Knowledge (dungeoneering) checks related to will-o'-wisps.

Knowledge (dungeoneering)

DC	Result
10	Will-o'-wisps are glowing balls of light that lure victims into sinkholes and quicksand.
15	Will-o'-wisps feed off of negative emotions and use electricity attacks.
20	Tracking will-o'-wisps is difficult due to their ability to fly and turn invisible. Wisps are intelligent and sadistic creatures, yet still might be reasoned with.
25	Will-o'-wisps are immune to all magic except *magic missile* and *maze* spells. They can speak Auran and Common but rarely do so.
30	A will-o'-wisp's invisibility is natural and cannot be dispelled. Also, wisps living in the same area often share the same memories, experiences, and goals.

Unilluminated Will-o'-Wisp

Will-o'-Wisp Lairs

Will-o'-wisps live in swamps and graveyards where decomposing plant and animal matter is common. Will-o'-wisps are likely to be less aggressive in graveyards, as there are plenty of corpses around and the emotional anguish of mourners proves quite satisfying. Adventurers seeking to confront a wisp should do so among the resting sites of the dead, particularly if they seek to strike a bargain or converse with one.

Wisps sometimes work with the undead that haunt burial sites, particularly ghouls or wights. The wisp patrols the area invisibly and if it sees a living being it floats above the trespasser's head, glowing brightly. The ghouls and wights learn that following the light leads them to prey, and the wisp feeds off the victim's resulting horror.

Will-o'-wisps must sleep for a few hours each day, and since they must be conscious in order to fly or maintain invisibility, a safe resting place is a necessity. Fortunately, their small size makes it easy for them to hide in hollow logs or mausoleums, or even to float just under the marshy surface of a bog (the gases permeating the mud around it keep the wisp from suffocating). Adventurers hunting for a will-o'-wisp should look for a faint glow coming from small hiding places or the distinct smell of sulphur (the will-o'-wisp's emissions).

These lairs are nothing more than sleeping holes and may change from day to day. There is nothing of interest in such places; even if a wisp wanted to personalize its lair, it has no way to manipulate objects. For the same rea-

son, the lairs hold no gathered treasure; however, a search of the surrounding area often reveals the decaying corpses of previous victims and their possessions.

Vs. Will-o'-Wisps

Despite all the research done on them, will-o'-wisps remain enigmatic. Sages have cut them open, separated the clear globes from the transparent sponge, dissected them and studied them, but questions still remain.

Beware Magic Immunity: The most pressing mystery surrounding will-o'-wisps is how they remain almost completely immune to magic. They do not possess the resistance to spells that certain extraplanar creatures have, and they do not have elemental resistances. They are simply and fully immune to most magic in an incredibly baffling way.

Only two spells can overcome a wisp's immunity to magic: *magic missile* and *maze*. Adventurers stalking a wisp would be wise to arm themselves with *wands of magic missile*, even to the point of equipping characters with Use Magic Device. Since wisps have no way of protecting themselves from *magic missiles* (being unable to use items like *brooches of shielding*), they tend to target obvious wizards first. While the wizard occupies the wisp, a rogue can use her wand. If the party is of sufficient level to cast *maze*, wisps probably won't pose much of a challenge.

Invisible Threats: Less mysterious but no less dangerous is the wisp's ability to turn invisible at will, as a natural ability. By ceasing to exhale, a will-o'-wisp can extinguish the flames that surround its body, leaving an effectively invisible transparent globe behind. The will-o'-wisp can remain invisible as long as it likes by breathing very shallowly and slowly. This is more dangerous than regular invisibility, as *detect magic* and *dispel magic* have no effect on wisps. The only ways to see an invisible will-o'-wisp are through the *see invisibility* and *invisibility purge* spells or by making a Spot check. (Which is very unlikely. An invisible, moving will-o'-wisp has an effective Hide bonus of +33. An invisible, stationary will-o'-wisp has an effective Hide bonus of +53.) Party spellcasters must prepare *see invisibility* and *invisibility purge* if they have access to it, or the party must obtain scrolls and wands of those spells.

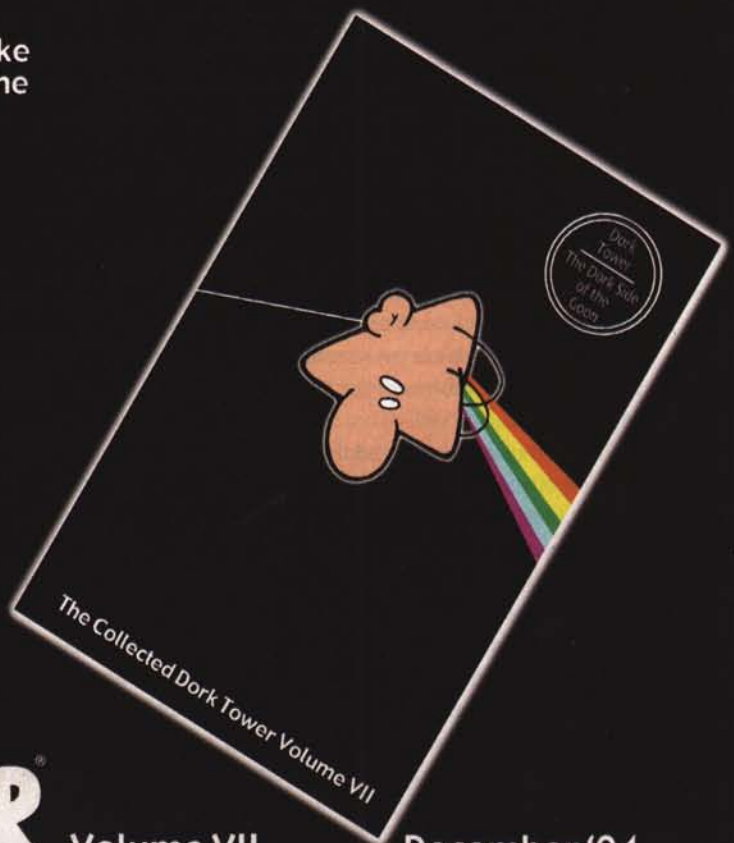
Flying Frighteners: Hunters should be wary of wisps appearing from nearly any direction, especially from above. Wisps have perfect maneuverability and a fast fly speed. In this case, ranged weapons are necessary and wizards and sorcerers without other useful spells to cast should use them. Even with their low base attack bonus, wizards and sorcerers have access to *true strike*, and thus have a good chance of hitting their target. Adventurers should create or seek out scrolls and wands of *true strike* if possible.

Archers should forgo use of the Manyshot and Rapid Shot feats and melee fighters should never use Combat Expertise or Power Attack. Hitting the wisp is the primary goal, and adventurers must avoid anything that lowers their attack bonuses.

Resist Electricity: Will-o'-wisps only possess one attack form, a touch attack that deals electricity damage. Adventurers should increase their touch Armor Class as much as they can and use items or spells that grant resistance to electricity.

If you don't kill the MEAT GOLEM, you can't take on the black pudding! HOW can you take on the BLACK PUDDING if you don't KILL THE MEAT?

Dork Tower
The Dork Side of the Goon



The Collected DORK TOWER® Volume VII December '04
HTTP://WWW.DORKTOWER.COM

by Nicholas J. Thalasinos
illustrated by Tom Fowler

Saurian Shifters

Saurian shifters owe their ancestry to humans and natural lycanthropes who possessed the ability to take on dinosaur forms. This reptilian race cannot assume full dinosaur forms as their lycanthrope cousins, but they can still manifest savage saurian features through a change they call "shifting."

Few know much about the history of saurian shifters, whether members of that race or the particularly brave scholars of others. Yet, what the race lacks in knowledge about their origins they make up for in legend and deeply rooted belief. According to their lore, saurian shifters are the survivors of an abyssal calamity that wracked a distant island now known only as the Isle of Dread. Surrounded by jagged reefs and populated by fierce creatures found nowhere else in the world, the legendary island nurtured an untamed yet bountiful jungle paradise. The ancestors of saurian shifters came to dwell on this island and grew prosperous, erecting a great city known as Thanaclan.

Although the specifics of the tragedy that led to Thanaclan's downfall remain a mystery, saurian shifters tell of horrors from the sea arising to taint the entire island with unnatural powers. Perverting many of the jungle's creatures into gigantic, ravaging beasts, this taint affected many of the people of Thanaclan as well. For some, this meant transformation into a variety of foul abominations, while others became merged with the new brutal creatures of the island. These unfortunate survivors of Thanaclan, forced to share their forms with the rapacious instincts of unnaturally created dinosaurs, became the first saurian shifters.

Many of the newly formed saurian shifters were overwhelmed by their nascent reptilian instincts, rampaging into the jungles and becoming little more than animals themselves. Others joined to form barbaric societies that also moved deep into the most hidden vales of the island's dense jungles. Inspired by their new animalistic blood, these reclusive tribes came to revere the great dinosaurs they now called kin. As far as any know, they continue their bloody worship to this day.

The few saurian shifters who refused to fall into savagery fled the island and scattered throughout the world, attempting to find refuge among the peoples and countries they discovered. Fearful of the saurian shifters' monstrous changes, those

outsiders the refugees encountered saw them only as freaks and monsters. Thus, saurian shifters live by hiding among races that would fear and revile them should their secrets be revealed. Yet, although they conceal themselves now, all saurian shifters know the tales of the ancient island of their origins and dream of one day reclaiming it as a homeland of their own.

Saurian shifters are a unique race that breeds true. When they breed with normal humans, they produce human offspring; on rare occasions, however, if two such children (or even grandchildren) meet and produce children of their own, they sometimes give birth to saurian shifters.

Personality: Saurian shifters realize that most other races perceive them as nothing more than particularly monstrous lycanthropes, and that their transformations inspire nothing less than abject terror in those races. As such, they remain a secretive, even paranoid people who raise their children to hide their abilities from others.

The reptilian heritages of saurian shifters often color their personalities. Those of predatory blood tend to act quickly and aggressively, with a savagery that shames even the most feral lycanthropes, while those who descend from herbivores exhibit stubborn, defensive natures. Saurian shifters descended from omnivores commonly display the most socially acceptable balance of traits.

Physical Description: A saurian shifter's reptilian heritage significantly influences his appearance. Ranging from 5 to 7 feet tall, with little appreciable difference between the builds of males and females, saurian shifters often exhibit ophidian pupils, skin of faintly reptilian shades, and extensive tattoolike bodily markings. Members of this race possess nearly hairless bodies, the thin and short hair that grows on their heads being the only exception. However, what hair they do grow is often brightly colored and frequently displays stripes and tufts of wild, contrasting colors ranging from normal human shades to wild reds, oranges, and violets.

When they shift, saurian shifters might exhibit a host of changes, growing long hard spines, elongated limbs, curved reptilian teeth, or any of countless other lizardlike features. This change is so pronounced that it's impossible to hide and often terrifies those unfamiliar with the race (and sometimes even those who know what to expect).

Relations: Saurian shifters make most members of other races incredibly uncomfortable. Seeming too much like lycanthropes for most peoples' comfort and possessing the terrifying ability to transform into what most others view as nightmarish monsters, fear often keeps even the best-intentioned outsiders at bay. As such, saurian shifters frequently hide their heritage, dying their hair or claiming to be descended from either mammalian shifters (if they exist) or even orcs. Although they find such lies demeaning at best, those who hope to blend in with the societies of other races often discover that even orcs find acceptance more readily than their people.

Saurian shifters find friendship among half-elves and half-orcs, both races understanding the prejudice of other races. Intelligent reptiles also often prove quite friendly to saurian shifters, seeing them as distant cousins. Oddly enough, saurian shifters feel a deep hatred for yuan-ti and the aquatic abominations called koprus (see *Monster Manual II*).

Alignment: As a race with strong ties to nature, saurian shifters tend toward neutrality. However, as individuals, their alignments are often influenced by the presence of predatory blood in their veins. Those saurian shifters descended from particularly savage hunters often find their reptilian instinct and quick tempers make them ill suited to the mewling complaints of law-abiding creatures, favoring a more chaotic view of "might makes right." On the other hand, saurian shifters descended from herbivores and omnivores tend to be much more even tempered, blending into societies and taking on a range of alignments with little instinctual complaint.

Saurian Shifters in Eberron

Shifters, sometimes called "weretouched," were introduced in the *Eberron Campaign Setting*. This article introduces a variant form of shifter that takes on dinosaur traits instead of mammalian traits.

Saurian shifters are not native to Khorvaire or Aerenal. If you wish to add saurian shifters to your campaign, consider placing them somewhere in Xen'drik or Argonnessen.

The *Eberron Campaign Setting* provides numerous shifter feats, which are available to saurian shifters just as though they were normal shifters. For every shifter feat a saurian shifter takes he increases the duration of his shifting by 1 round. For every two shifter feats a saurian shifter takes, the number of times per day he can tap into his shifting ability increases by one. Thus, a saurian shifter with two shifter feats can shift two times per day (instead of the usual one), and each use of the ability lasts for a number of rounds equal to 5 (instead of 3) + the shifter's Constitution modifier.

The *Eberron Campaign Setting* is not necessary to use this race, but it provides further shifter information.

Saurian Shifter Lands: Saurian shifters lack a true homeland, most living secret lives among members of other races. Those who turn to adventuring sometimes seek the mysterious island that legend says their lycanthrope ancestors came from. Small settlements made up entirely of saurian shifters sometimes exist on the edge of civilization, supporting themselves through hunting and trade, but generally remaining aloof from other races. Outsiders who pass through such settlements regularly leave unharmed, but always feel uneasy while there and seldom return.

Religion: Saurian shifters tend to worship draconic deities, to whom they feel a distant kinship, as well as the rep-

Saurian Shifter Vital Statistics

The following tables might help you round out your saurian shifter character. Use these tables by following the instructions for determining these random numbers on page 109 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Random Starting Ages

Adulthood	Barbarian Rogue Sorcerer	Bard Fighter Paladin Ranger	Cleric Druid Monk Wizard
20 years	+1d6	+1d8	+2d8

Aging Effects

Middle Age	Old	Venerable	Maximum Age
40 years	60 years	80 years	+2d20 years

Random Height and Weight

Gender	Base Height	Height Modifier	Base Weight	Weight Modifier
Male	5'0"	2d12	120 lb.	(2d4) lb.
Female	5'0"	2d12	120 lb.	(2d4) lb.

tilian deities of other races. Bahamut and Tiamat accept many saurian shifter followers, as do neutral gods who preach a dogma of acceptance and perseverance under oppression. The dinosaur god, Ka, presented in *Dragon* #318, would also be a perfect patron for any saurian shifter.

Languages: When living in seclusion, saurian shifters speak Draconic, although they understand the need to know Common in order to pass themselves off as humans. Saurian shifters speak Draconic with a thick accent that distinguishes it from the speech of lizardfolk or scholars. Dragons often recognize this subtle difference as an ancient dialect of the language and treat saurian shifters with greater respect accordingly.

Names: Saurian shifters usually acquire two names. At birth their parents choose a short human name from those commonly used in the area. Upon becoming an adult, a saurian shifter creates a new, formal name in Draconic that usually reflects his ancestry or an important event in his life. Most saurian shifters continue to use their common name around non-shifters, but use their favored Draconic name with others of their kind or those who understand that language.

Translated Draconic Names: Drillhorn, Farflyer, Goretooth, Grayseek, Hollydawn, Maimaxe, Shatterspine, Widefoot, Wyrmfell.

Adventurers: Saurian shifters often feel out of place and adventure to make their own way in the world. They seek the company of others like themselves—those of mixed blood or with a magical lineage. A few search for evidence of their ancient homeland or seek out normal dinosaurs in the hopes of reawakening some ancient bond. Some, primarily predators, travel for no other reason than to sate their ever-present thirst for the hunt.

Saurian Shifters' Racial Traits

- Reptilian and Shapechanger Subtypes: Saurian shifters are humanoids with both the reptilian and shapechanger subtypes.
- +2 Constitution, –2 Intelligence, –2 Charisma: Saurian shifters are hearty and resilient, but their inherent reptilian nature detracts from both their reasoning ability and their social interaction.
- Medium: As Medium creatures, saurian shifters have no special bonuses or penalties due to their size.
- Saurian shifter base land speed is 30 feet.
- Shifting (Su): A saurian shifter can tap into his lycanthrope heritage to gain short bursts of physical power. Once per day, a saurian shifter can enter a state that is superficially similar to a barbarian's rage. Each saurian shifter has one of the following shifter traits—characteristics that manifest themselves when a character is shifting. Each shifter trait provides a +2 bonus to one of the character's physical ability scores (Strength, Dexterity, or Constitution) and grants some other advantage as well. In addition to a number of common shifter traits, several unique to saurian shifters are described in the following section.

  Shifting is a free action and lasts for a number of rounds equal to 3 + the saurian shifter's Constitution modifier. (If a shifter trait or other effect increases the character's Con modifier, use the newly improved modifier). A saurian shifter can take feats to improve this ability (see the Shifting in Eberron sidebar).

  Shifting, although related to and developed from lycanthropy, is neither an affliction nor a curse. It is not passed on by bite or claw attacks, and a saurian shifter can't be cured—shifting is a natural ability for the race.
- Low-Light Vision: Saurian shifters can see twice as far as a human in starlight, moonlight, torchlight, and similar conditions of poor illumination. They retain the ability to distinguish color and detail under these conditions.

- +2 racial bonus on Balance, Climb, and Jump checks: A saurian shifter's reptilian heritage enhances many of his physical skills.
- Automatic Languages: Common, Draconic. Bonus Languages: Elven, Gnome, Halfling, and Sylvan.
- Favored Class: Ranger. A multiclass saurian shifter's ranger class doesn't count when determining whether he takes an experience point penalty for multiclassing.

Shifter Traits

Each saurian shifter receives two of the following special traits, which are selected when the character is created and cannot be changed thereafter.

Beasthide (Su): While shifting, a beasthide saurian shifter gains a +2 bonus to Constitution and thick skin that provides a +2 natural armor bonus.

Broadwing (Su): While shifting, a broadwing saurian shifter gains a +2 bonus to Dexterity and can slow his descent while falling. A shifter using this ability takes damage from a fall as if it were 40 feet shorter than it actually is.

Junglerunner (Su): While shifting, a junglerunner saurian shifter gains a +2 bonus to Dexterity and increases his base land speed by 20 feet.

Longtooth (Su): While shifting, a longtooth saurian shifter gains a +2 bonus to Strength and grows fangs that can be used as a natural weapon, dealing 1d6 points of damage (plus an additional +1 for every four character levels he has) with a successful bite attack. He cannot attack more than once per round with his bite, even if his base attack bonus is high enough to give him multiple attacks. He can use his bite as a secondary attack (taking a –5 penalty on his attack roll) while wielding a weapon.

Raptorleap (Su): While shifting, a saurian shifter gains a +2 bonus to Strength, a +4 bonus on Jump checks, and he treats all Jump checks as though he had a running start.

Razorclaw (Su): While shifting, a razorclaw saurian shifter gains a +2 bonus to Strength and grows claws that can be used as natural weapons. These claws deal 1d4 points of damage (plus an additional +1 for every four character levels he has) with each successful attack. He can attack with one claw as a standard action or with two claws as a full attack action (as a primary natural weapon). He cannot attack more than once per round with a single claw, even if his base attack bonus is high enough to give him multiple attacks. He can attack with a claw as a light off-hand weapon while wielding a weapon in his primary hand, but all his attacks in that round suffers a –2 penalty.

Widetail (Su): While shifting, a widetail saurian shifter gains a +2 bonus to Constitution and grows a thick tail that can be used a natural weapon, dealing 1d6 points of bludgeoning damage (plus an additional +1 for every four character levels he has) with a successful tail slap attack. He cannot attack more than once per round with his tail slap, even if his base attack bonus is high enough to give him multiple attacks. He can use his tail slap as a secondary attack (taking a –5 penalty on his attack roll) while wielding a weapon.

Code Monkey Publishing

RPG Toolkit

Throughout time games have evolved to such an extent that no man can know the rules to them all!

Monkeys to the rescue! Saving you time and headaches in understanding all the rules, Code Monkey Publishing is proud to bring you RPG Toolkit, the next evolution in role playing game utilities!

Designed for generic rules systems, whether d20, d42, or d666, RPG Toolkit will allow you the freedom and flexibility to make your game the way YOU want it to be!

Coming 2005

www.codemonkeypublishing.com

RPG Toolkit is an official licensed product of Wizards of the Coast, Inc. The Wizards of the Coast logo is a registered trademarks of Wizards of the Coast, Inc., a subsidiary of Hasbro, Inc. RPG Toolkit and the Code Monkey Publishing logo are registered trademarks of Code Monkey Publishing, LLC

by Richard Farrese • illustrated by Niklas Janssen

TREASURES OF THE ELVEN EMPIRE

Of all the humanoids, few have endured longer than the elves. No other race is more responsible for the development of the magical arts. None have crafted more wonders than the descendants of the first elven scions. The items included in this article reflect the master craftsmanship for which elves have become famous.

Armor of the Long Journey

Thurgian, one of the most celebrated smiths in elven history, receives credit for the creation of dozens of new magic items. Among the many wonders he invented is the *armor of the long journey*. Although certainly not the most powerful relics of Thurgian's making, these simple suits of full plate armor are nevertheless cherished by those who possess them.

A suit of *armor of the long journey* is made from a mundane-looking steel alloy bearing no special marks or runes. While the armor appears bulky, a closer inspection reveals that it is actually as light as a chain shirt.

Armor of the long journey protects its wearer as a suit of *+2 full plate armor of cold resistance*. The suit, however, is so light that its owner can move at his normal base land speed, rather than the reduced land speed caused by normal full plate. The *armor of the long journey* also aids its wearer in carrying great loads. While wearing this armor, the owner treats all medium loads as light loads, and all heavy loads as medium loads. Furthermore, the wearer of *armor of the long journey* never suffers from the effects of fatigue caused by traveling. Combat and other conditions (such as swimming, raging, and certain spells) fatigue the wearer normally.

Moderate abjuration; CL 6th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bear's endurance, resist energy;* Price 39,650 gp; Weight 25 lb.

Boots of the Woodland

Another creation of Thurgian, these enchanted calf-high boots are fashioned from soft leather or suede with thick soles made from spongy hide. The boots, which come in all manners of style, only have one distinctive and uniting feature in the form of a rune engraved upon each sole, forming a crude "X."

These boots, perfect for rangers and druids, bestow great speed and agility upon their owner while traveling in woodlands. In any forest environment (which includes sparse woods and tree-covered hills or mountains) the wearer of a pair of *boots of the woodland* is protected as though under the permanent effect of an *endure elements* spell, adds 10 feet to his base land speed, gains a +4 insight bonus on all Reflex saves, and benefits from a +10 competence bonus on all Move Silently checks. Both boots must be worn in a forest environment for 24 hours for their magic to take effect.

Faint abjuration; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *cat's grace, endure elements, expeditious retreat;* Price 16,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Cape of the General

Savage orc and goblin tribes universally feared the mighty elven armies of ancient times, but the elves' celebrated victories were in great part due to the cunning and charismatic generals who led them in battle. In those legendary days, the leader of each elven host wore a cape made out of glistening night-blue silk with myriad silver runes imprinted around the collar. This garment served to display the officer's rank, but was also magically endowed to help him in his duties. Most of these cloaks went to the grave with the generals who wore them, but fortunate tomb robbers occasionally stumble upon a *cape of the general*. In modern elven society, very few of these garments remain, but some are still handed down from one generation to the next.

A *cape of the general* functions as a *+2 cloak of resistance* and also provides a +2 enhancement bonus to the wearer's Charisma and Intelligence scores. When worn by a character with elven blood, the item grants a +4 morale bonus on saving throws made against fear effects to all elven-blooded allies within a 30-foot radius.

Faint abjuration and transmutation; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, *eagle's splendor, fox's cunning, remove fear,* creator must be elf or half-elf; Price 38,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Hand of the Creator

Clerics of Corellon Larethian dedicate their lives to the protection of the elven people and their ancient culture. Those who prove themselves worthy champions of their faith sometimes receive a special blade dubbed the *hand of the creator*. This intricately designed punching dagger (katar) is fashioned from mithral. Its handle is covered with strands of dark blue

leather strips, and its silvery blade is marked with tiny elven runes.

The *hand of the creator* works as a *+1 keen punching dagger* that deals an extra 1d4 points of damage when wielded by an elf or half-elf. When used by a character with elven blood, the *hand of the creator* bestows the Curse of the Creator on any creature without elven blood it strikes. The non-elf foe can make a DC 14 Will save to resist the curse. The Curse of the Creator surrounds the creature in a permanent *faerie fire* effect and causes the target to be permanently shaken. (A shaken creature takes a –2 penalty on attack rolls, saving throws, skill checks, and ability checks.) The *hand of the creator's* wielder can remove the curse as a standard action. The spells *break enchantment, limited wish, miracle, remove curse,* and *wish* can also remove the curse.

Moderate abjuration; CL 7th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *bestow curse, faerie fire, keen edge,* creator must be elf or half-elf; Price 48,502 gp; Weight 1/2 lb.

Quiver of Plenty

Crafted by Nestaril the Undying, one of the most venerated elven wizards of the previous age, these rare quivers are prized by those who own them. Although elves of ancient and noble lineage occasionally inherit a *quiver of plenty* from their forefathers, most of these items were destroyed long ago. Still, some remain, but until recently no sage could duplicate these valuable magical items.

Quivers of plenty are frequently made from leather of rich browns and verdant greens. At a foot long and about half as wide, the face of a *quiver of plenty* is a work of art, covered in resplendent reliefs representing images of the natural world, such as monkey-filled glades, packs of animals, or ancient deities of nature. Aside from its rich coloration and wonderful design, the quiver is otherwise like any other: A simple leather strap allows its owner to attach it to his back or waist.

A *quiver of plenty* provides its owner with a limitless supply of various types of masterwork arrows. Whenever the owner reaches into the *quiver of plenty* his mental desire causes it to instantly create an arrow of the desired type that remains in existence long enough to fire. The *quiver of plenty* can create an infinite number of wooden arrows, steel-tipped arrows, alchemical silver-tipped arrows, and cold iron arrows. It can also create five adamantine-tipped arrows each day. If the quiver's owner drops, hands off, or otherwise lets go of a created arrow in a way that isn't firing it from a bow, the arrow disappears. All arrows created by a *quiver of plenty* dissipate into nothingness immediately after they strike a solid object (whether the intended target or not).

Strong conjuration; CL 9th; Craft Wondrous Item, *major creation;* Price 18,000 gp; Weight 1 lb.

Rod of Revealing

Cherished by all who face illusionists in battle, *rods of revealing* are especially prized among those who wish they could categorize everything as easily as day and night. These highly valuable rods appear as simple iron scepters carved with an open eye upon one end.

A *rod of revealing* suppresses all magic from the school of illusion as if it were within an *antimagic field*. This effect covers a 110-foot radius centered on the rod and is useable once per day. The rod can maintain this illusion suppression field for 110 minutes (1 hour, 50 minutes). While the rod affects an area, no new illusion spells or effects can be cast or triggered. Any attempt to cast

A *shield of obstruction* is a *spiked +3 light wooden shield* that can grow a *wall of thorns*, as per the spell, once per day. This *wall of thorns* is 90 feet long and 10 feet thick and lasts 90 minutes. It must be created in a straight line and is not shapeable by the wielder.

Moderate transmutation; CL 9th; Craft Magic Arms and Armor, *wall of thorns;* Price 27,403 gp; Weight 5 lb.

such a spell in the area instantly fails and items with illusion effects (such as a *ring of invisibility*) simply fail to function. A *rod of revealing* has no effect on nonillusion spells and effects.

Strong abjuration; CL 11th; Craft Rod, *antimagic field, invisibility purge;* Price 60,000 gp; Weight 5 lb.

Shield of Obstruction

The elven war masters of ancient times commissioned a number of magic arms and vestments forged by the greatest smiths of the era. The generals who led the great elven hosts used these weapons and armors to reward their loyal commanders as well as their most valiant warriors. Today, few of these items remain; the hardy *shield of obstruction* is one of them.

Shields of obstruction are spiked light wooden shields most commonly shaped into the form of pointed-edged leaves. Along with countless battle scars, each is covered with intricate carvings of vines that bristle with protruding thorns. This tangled motif often circles the ancient insignia of the elven house the shield's original owner served.

Thespian's Mask

Sometimes called a "performer's face" or "actor's visage," each of these fascinating masks is a unique and intricate work of art. Fashioned by the greatest elven artists of the modern age, no two *thespian's masks* are alike.

A *thespian's mask* is carved from the finest ivory and then painted to resemble the face of a humanoid creature. Depending on the whim of the artisan creating it, a *thespian's mask* might, for example, bear a fearsome orc warrior's visage, the fair skin of an elven maiden, or the face of an old human sage.

When worn, the mask merges with its owner's face, changing his features to match those of the humanoid creature depicted upon it. The change affects the wearer as the spell *disguise self,* but it only changes the wearer's appearance to match that of the face the mask was crafted to depict. For example, a thespian mask in the form of a fair-skinned elven maiden would disguise its wearer—including clothing and equipment—as an elven maiden and nothing else. This ability remains in effect for as long as the mask is worn.

Faint illusion; CL 5th; Craft Wondrous Item, creator must possess at least 10 ranks in Craft (sculpting), *disguise self;* Price 3,000 gp; Weight —.

OffWorld Designs Inc.

www.offworlddesigns.com

OffWorld has the shirts everybody wants including these favorites...

DESIGNS BY ARTISTS:
STEPHEN HICKMAN, JOHN KOVALIC, RAY VANTILBURG, VOLTAIRE AARON WILLIAMS, L.A. WILLIAMS, AND MORE.

1-800-900-9056

For one stop shopping visit us at...

www.offworlddesigns.com

by Eric Haddock • art provided by Sony Entertainment

GOD OF WAR™

In Sony Entertainment's newest release for the Playstation 2, *God of War*, you play Kratos, a kind gentleman of easy repose. That is, if by "kind gentleman" you think of a one-man killing machine whose only goal is to slaughter everyone, and by "easy repose" you imagine an unearthly focus on the martial arts that—when combined with his favored weapon—can sever heads from five paces.

In nearly every D&D campaign, even the best-intentioned PCs can, at some point, benefit from or be driven to the role of an unstoppable killing machine. This article focuses on the kindly gentleman Kratos and what he can teach D&D characters about becoming better adventurers and, of course, more lethal combatants.

Kratos in Us All

There's a lot of Kratos in every adventurer. He starts out simple enough: a typical Spartan soldier who advances his skill to the point where he leaves the army and makes a name for himself adventuring. as a result killing hordes of monsters and scores of bad guys. Although he commits some evil in the process, he reaches a level of expertise that enables him to kill a god—so naturally that's what he sets out to do. Sounds like a D&D campaign from the beginning, right?

Almost. For this adventure, Kratos requires some help. The gods of the Greek pantheon have sent Kratos on a quest—an atonement really—to make up for his past sins, of which Kratos has more than his share. To make things right, the deities have ordered the assassination of the God of War Ares, and they've chosen the right man for the job. Kratos is all about war and the cold, emotionless application of his savage fury toward his goal.

The Blades of Chaos

Even though being able to use medusa heads to turn your enemies to stone—then using your fancy weapons to smash them to bits—is a stylish flourish, one of the coolest parts of *God of War* is definitely the game's signature weapon: the blades of chaos. Kratos's signature pieces of equipment, these vicious weapons are essentially a pair of chains with wicked blades at the end, although there's far more to these weapons than that.

Presented here are *anarch razors*, lesser artifacts bestowed by the gods themselves upon their emissaries, inspired by the blades of chaos.

Anarch Razors

Anarch razors are *+3 adamantine weapons* designed by the gods to deliver more damage than what the shape and size of the actual blade would suggest. These cruel, curving weapons have 10-foot lengths of chain extending from their pommels, which extend through their wielder's flesh and fasten directly to his bones. Found only in twin sets, both blades (and accompanying chains) have 40 hit points and a hardness of 20—but the weapons cannot be sundered in a traditional fashion (see Mettle of the Gods below). As a standard action, the wielder may command the *anarch razors* to mimic the characteristics of any metal the wielder chooses, allowing them to overcome damage reduction even though the actual metal does not change. For example, the wielder could choose cold iron and the *anarch razors* would act as though they were made of that metal for the purpose of bypassing damage reduction. This designation persists until a new choice is made by the wielder.

Anarch razors have reach and can strike opponents 10 feet away as well as adjacent foes. Any character who wields a pair of *anarch razors* is considered proficient with them.

Ritual of Linking: *Anarch razors* are not items found on the shelf. Rather, they are bestowed upon those willing to make a great sacrifice. In fact, beyond the rare wielders of *anarch razors*, few even know of the sacrifice wielding such weapons entails.

Attaching *anarch razors* requires a ritual that demands the permanent sacrifice of one point of Charisma and one point of Strength. Note that installation of a single blade is not possible, both *anarch razors* must be fused to a wielder and the ability score cost accommodates both blades.

In addition, the ritual demands an offering of allegiance. As such, the wielder must worship—and swear his service to—a deity willing to grant the wielder the blades. The specifics of the ritual and any associated expensive material components are best left to the Dungeon Master to decide based on a sacrifice appropriate to the campaign.

Once the ritual is complete, the weapons are permanently attached to the appendages the wielder chooses. Nothing but the deity or the permanent loss of those appendages can take away *anarch razors* once attached, not even *miracle* or *wish*.

Mettle of the Gods: If some event should destroy the blades or the chains (such as exposure to a *sphere of annihilation* or similar powerful artifact) then whatever is left of the *anarch razors* retracts into the appendages of the wielder and remains dormant for 24 hours, after which new chains and blades are reconstituted and are available for use. Deities do not let something as trivial as the destruction of the material representation of their will stop their plans.

All Are Subject: The ritual installation of *anarch razors* whispers secrets into the wielder's mind. Once the ritual is complete, the wielder is able to use the *anarch razors* as though he had the Whirlwind Attack feat, regardless of whether he qualifies for the feat. Note that this application is only useful when the wielder is using the *anarch razors*, not with any other weapon.

Chaotic Womb: *Anarch razors* can wrap around enemies, making it difficult for them to extract themselves from a successful grapple. *Anarch razors* grant the wielder a +4 bonus on grapple checks.

WHAT'S IN IT FOR YOU?

Here's the thing: You want *God of War* because there's nothing like swinging a chain with a big blade on the end and killing some thug who got up in your grill. When you have the savage killing power of the gods behind you, you don't have to take that behavior from lowly humans, and in *God of War*, boy, you don't have to take it. Cut disrespectors like Medusa bad in living color. Once you're done cutting it up with Medusa, you can even pick up and use her head to stop enemies in their tracks, permanently. Oh, the monocular monster, Cyclops, has something to bring up with you too, and the horny fiend Minotaur probably wants you to get lost, and didn't the Harpies leave a message? They're all waiting for you in *God of War* and you're probably going to have to cut them up, but not with jokes.

Oh, yes, there's much more: After a workout of vicious death-dealing combo moves in surprisingly fluid (like blood) combat action and visiting with mythological monsters from, well, actual Greek mythology, take a break to exercise your brains. There are puzzles to solve that can be applied liberally to your own campaign. Take *God of War* as an example. Even if your PCs have the power of the gods behind them, you can still challenge them effectively with something other than tough monsters. Even folk as powerful as your PCs or Kratos need access to new and exciting challenges, rather than simply armies of thugs that need killing.

So, we've learned two things from *God of War*: killing bad guys with the savage power of the gods can be fun and solving puzzles can challenge anyone, no matter how powerful. Oh, and homicidal heroes look best in red... dripping red.

Yes, *God of War* has you written all over it. Even if you tell your parents or girlfriend you don't like hack-and-slash games, deep down you really enjoy them... a lot. Appeal to both sides of your brain with the game that has it all: killing, magic, puzzles, and a truly mythic campaign.

ANARCH RAZOR

Exotic Weapon	Cost	Dmg (S)	Dmg (M)	Critical	Range Increment	Weight	Type
One-Handed Melee Weapon							
Anarch Razors	special	1d10	1d12	19–20/x2	—	special	Slashing

NEW FEAT

In his quest, Kratos demonstrates a morbid new feat from which other adventurers might benefit.

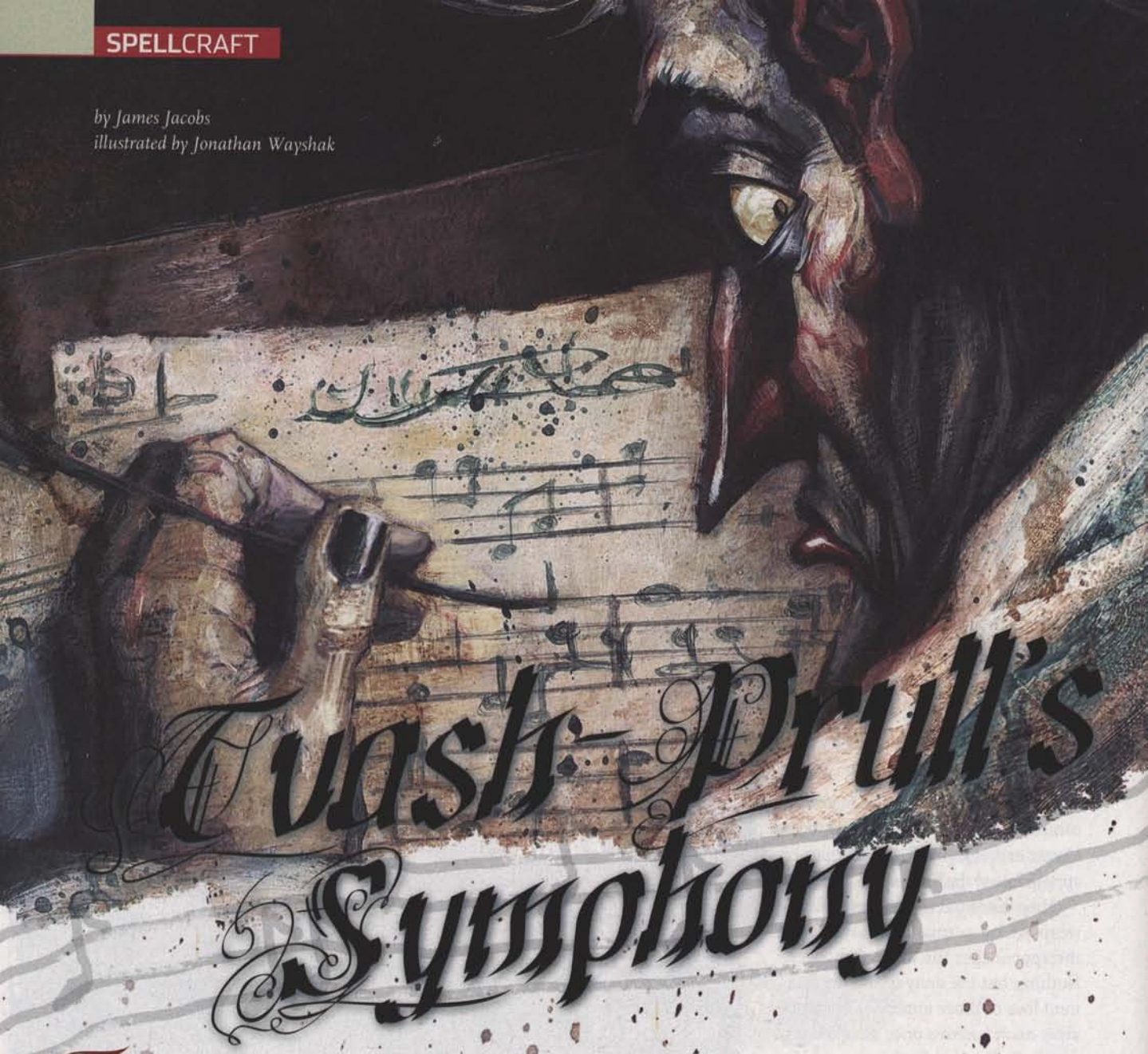
Heads Up [General]

You are capable of using the gaze attacks of a slain creature. Why should monsters have all the fun?

Prerequisite: Spell-like abilities or ability to cast arcane or divine spells.

Benefit: If you grasp the severed head of a creature with a gaze supernatural ability (such as the petrifying gaze of a medusa) within 1 hour of the creature being slain, you may use that creature's head to employ the slain creature's gaze supernatural ability as a standard action up to three times during the next 24 hours. After that time the head is rendered useless. Retrieving the head from a slain creature is a full-round action that provokes an attack of opportunity.

by James Jacobs
illustrated by Jonathan Wayshak



Tvash-Prull's Symphony

Tvash-Prull is one of the more obscure figures in the history of music. The talented half-elf spent most of his youth in a large symphony hall working odd jobs that ranged from janitor to carpenter to personal assistant for many of the hall's regular performers. Yet as he worked, he absorbed a great deal of knowledge. One winter, disaster struck and the hall burnt to the ground in a fiery conflagration. Tvash-Prull was forced out onto the street, where he took up the mantle of an adventuring bard. After retiring from the adventuring life several years later, he turned his attentions in full back to his music, and it is from this period of his life that his accomplishments are best remembered.

Tvash-Prull composed nearly one hundred and fifty movements for many different types of compositions during his twilight years, yet he never composed a full symphony. He explained to his admirers that he simply got distracted too easily, that he didn't have the patience or talent to focus on such a large undertaking. In truth, Tvash-Prull's deepest desire was to write a symphony for the ages, one that would be remembered for centuries to come. He theorized that by weaving several unique spells he had researched into the fabric of a symphony's music, the result would be one to rival the classics. He toiled for years in secret on his masterpiece, but unfortunately never got to hear it—Tvash-Prull died of old age only minutes after finishing his life's work.

The symphony itself usually appears as a large folio that contains several dozen sheets of music for a full orchestra of instruments. Copies of the symphony typically appear on high-quality sheets of parchment or paper and are beautifully illuminated. The artistic quality of this complete symphony in sheet music form is of such mastery that it is worth 2,500 gp to a collector on the merits of its workmanship alone. To a collector who knows the symphony's secret (see the New Spells sidebar), it is worth considerably more.

Fugue of Tvash-Prull

Evocation [Sonic]
Level: Brd 4
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Medium (100 ft. + 10 ft./level)
Area: 30 ft. radius spread
Duration: Concentration (up to 1 round/level)
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You create a discordant cacophony of haunting and alien music in the area of effect. Those who save against the spell are disoriented for as long as they remain in the area and suffer a –2 penalty on attack rolls and skill checks for that time.

Those who fail their save become affected by the haunting fugue in semi-random ways. On each affected creature's turn (as long as it remains in the area of effect), the caster makes a Perform check. This check may be made with any type of Perform skill, but if the skill used is keyboard instruments, percussion instruments, string instruments, or wind instruments, the caster gains a +2 circumstance bonus on the check. Other characters cannot affect this skill check through the use of the aid another action. The result of the check determines how the victim's mind and body are affected by the spell. The caster may select any of the effects for which his Perform check exceeds or equals the required DC to manifest.

Focus: A miniature violin bow made of platinum worth 250 gp.

Perform Check DC	Result of *Fugue of Tvash-Prull* Perform check
15	Victim takes 3d6 points of nonlethal damage.
20	Victim takes 3d6 points of sonic damage.
25	Victim is shaken for 1 round, deafened for 1 round, or knocked down.
30	Victim is nauseated for 1 round, blinded for 1 round, or frightened for 1 round.
35	Victim is stunned for 1 round.
40	Victim takes 1d6 points of ability damage from a randomly determined ability.
45	Victim attacks nearest target.
50	Victim gains 1d4 negative levels.
55	Victim is *feebleminded*.
60	Victim is slain.

Love's Lament

Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Brd 3
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: 60 ft.
Effect: Cone-shaped burst
Duration: Instantaneous
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

Music has great power to enhance emotion. In particular, the emotions of joy and despair

New Spells within Tvash-Prull's Symphony

One of the little-known facts about his symphony is that several of Tvash-Prull's unique spells are cleverly encoded in the sheet music. *Read magic* deciphers the magic, as does a successful Spellcraft check (DC 22 + spell level), but the spells cannot be cast directly from the sheets.

Tvash-Prull's symphony was created with bardic spellcasters in mind and thus the spells hidden therein are only accessible to them. A bard who successfully studies the symphony's spells may exchange any spells he currently knows of an equal level for any of the spells encoded in the sheets. He can also select any of these spells as new spells in the future when he increases his bard spellcaster levels.

Bard Spells

1st-Level Bard Spells
Undersong: You may make Perform checks in place of Concentration checks.

2nd-Level Bard Spells
Tvash-Prull's Bonefiddle: A spectral bow plays upon the target's bones, dealing sonic damage.

3rd-Level Bard Spells
Love's Lament: A cone of disheartening music deals 1d6 Wisdom damage and nauseates those affected.

4th-Level Bard Spells
Fugue of Tvash-Prull: The target is hindered or harmed in a manner dictated by the caster's Perform skill.

6th-Level Bard Spells
Symphonic Nightmare: Disruptive music fills the target's sleep, preventing him from resting.

seem to be especially tied to music. With this spell, you create a cone of music that draws upon the sadness, guilt, and despair of those within its area of effect. All creatures in the area who successfully resist the spell can still hear the music and suffer a –4 penalty on Listen checks for 1 round.

Those who fail to save against *love's lament* are reminded of all their lost loves and disappointments in life. The music seizes upon these feelings and magnifies them, so that the victims of the spell take 1d6 points of Wisdom damage and are nauseated for 1d4 rounds.

Symphonic Nightmare

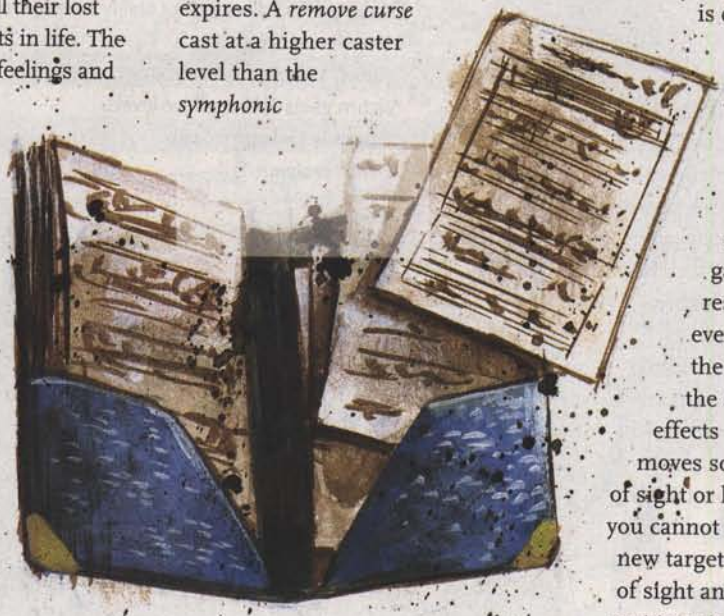
Enchantment (Compulsion) [Mind-Affecting]
Level: Brd 6
Components: V, S, F
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Touch
Target: Living creature touched
Duration: 1 day/level (D)
Saving Throw: Will negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

A creature targeted by this spell loses the ability to dream during sleep or rest. Rather, in place of dreams, the target's slumbering mind is filled with the sounds of a discordant orchestra. After the victim's first attempt to sleep, it incurs a –2 penalty on all Wisdom-based skill checks. This penalty persists as long as the *symphonic nightmare* maintains its hold on the target. This spell affects all creatures that sleep or enter sleeplike trances, although creatures without the need to sleep are effectively immune.

In addition, the creature's sleep is now haunted. It can no longer gain complete rest from sleeping or resting. The target does not regain hit points or heal ability damage naturally, nor is it able to prepare spells if doing so requires a full night's rest.

The creature is, however, now immune to the *dream* and *nightmare* spells, as well as to other effects that cause nightmares (such as a night hag's dream haunting ability).

The caster may lift the effects of this curse at will, but it is otherwise difficult to remove a *symphonic nightmare* before its duration expires. A *remove curse* cast at a higher caster level than the *symphonic nightmare* spell removes it, as does a successful *break enchantment*. Otherwise, a *wish* or *miracle* is required to lift the curse.



Focus: A small statue of an opened skull within which is arranged a miniature orchestra. The quality of this component must be extraordinary, and carries a value of 1,000 gp.

Tuash-Trull's Bonefiddle

Necromancy
Level: Brd 2
Components: V, S, M
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Short (25 ft. + 5 ft./2 levels)
Target: One creature with a skeleton or exoskeleton
Duration: Concentration (up to 1 round/level)
Saving Throw: Fortitude negates
Spell Resistance: Yes

You call up a ghostly fiddle bow in the air above the targeted creature. This bow immediately descends into the target's body and begins to saw back and forth against its skeleton. Although the music produced is eerily beautiful, it causes intense pain and anguish to the victim. Each round, the victim takes 1d6 points of sonic damage and suffers a –20 penalty on all Move Silently checks; this damage is considered to be continual damage for the purposes of disrupting spellcasting. As a move action, the caster may move the *bonefiddle* to another creature in range, but the new target gains a saving throw to resist the spell. If a target ever makes its saving throw, the *bonefiddle* vanishes and the spell ends. The spell's effects continue even if the target moves so you no longer have line of sight or line of effect to him, but you cannot shift the *bonefiddle* to a new target unless you have both line of sight and line of effect to the current target and to the intended target.

Material Component: A miniature silver fiddle worth at least 30 gp.

Undersong

Transmutation
Level: Brd 1
Components: V
Casting Time: 1 standard action
Range: Personal
Target: You
Duration: 1 min./level

When you cast this spell, a familiar and soothing song wells up in your mind. The song does not distract you from any task at hand—on the contrary, by humming along to the tune you can focus your mind with ease. As long as this spell is in effect, you may use any Perform skill check in place of a Concentration skill check. You must decide which skill to use before any check is made.

by Mike Mearls • illustrated by Kyle Hunter • images provided by Wizards of the Coast

NONLETHAL SCENARIOS

Warbands clash in epic struggles, with spells, swords, and bows ready to dole out destruction. *Fireballs* scorch the battlefield, arrows whistle through the air, and axes hammer into shields, creating a symphony of battle. In most of the scenarios for D&D Miniatures, destroying your opponent's army lies at the heart of every tactic. From tile placement to carefully moving your troops into position, you must take care to keep your forces clear of harm while placing your opponent in an untenable position. While a scenario might add wrinkles to your planning, a brutal, overwhelming assault is still your best friend.

The scenarios introduced in this article add a new layer of challenge to D&D Miniatures by making the simple act of brutalizing your opponent's warband a secondary objective. Each of the scenarios presented here rewards actions other than killing off or routing your opponents. These variants make defeating a figure a useful move, but something that grants only a temporary advantage. In some cases, slaying an opponent's figure might even be a bad idea.

RESPAWNING

The three sample scenarios presented in this article, Capture the Flag, the Great Race, and Dungeonball, make use of new respawning rules. Respawning takes the bite out of a figure's death. When a figure is destroyed, it returns to the battlefield after a few rounds. The rules include some special cases that prevent spellcasters from becoming too powerful and continuing effects from becoming too weak. If a scenario uses respawning, the following rules apply:

- When a figure is destroyed, remove it from the battlefield and apply all effects triggered by its destruction as normal.
- You continue to activate the figure as normal, but it cannot take any actions since it is not on the battlefield.
- After the figure has taken two activations while removed from the game, place it on any of the exit squares of your entry tile. Do this as its entire action for its third activation. You must place the figure on its third activation. You cannot choose to hold it off the board. If all of the exit squares are occupied, place the figure as close to one of your unoccupied exit squares as possible.
- A figure brought back into play heals all damage it has taken. However, all other effects that it suffers or benefits from remain in place and continue to operate as normal. The figure does not regain spells, attacks, or other abilities that have a limited number of uses. It retains the number of such uses it had when it was destroyed.
- Any state that would destroy a creature upon its return to play, such as petrification, does not carry over when a figure respawns. Poison effects do not carry over.

Medusa

- A routed figure that exits the board is considered destroyed. It returns to play in the same manner as a creature that was destroyed in combat.
- A figure is considered destroyed if, under the standard tournament rules, your opponent would score points for destroying or routing it. For example, a Medusa's gaze turns its victims to statues. Even though the figure is technically still on the board as a statue, it returns to play.
- Any effect that triggers on the destruction of a creature works as normal. It has no effect on a creature's ability to respawn. For example, the Baaz Draconian turns into a statue when it is destroyed. The statue occupies a space on the map as normal, and the creature spawns as per these rules. This also applies to the Lich Necromancer's commander effect.

In essence, respawning saves a figure in its current state, heals it, and returns it to action after a few turns. These rules make effects that confer penalties or continuing damage, such as *spiritual weapon* or *ray of enfeeblement*, more useful than normal. Spellcasters and other creatures that have limited use of their abilities are at a disadvantage. A Large Red Dragon might use its breath weapon to destroy a host of Kobold Skirmishers, only to have them return to the fight after a short time. Meanwhile, the dragon's breath weapon is used up.

The respawn rules are meant for scenarios where destroying an opponent's figures plays a secondary role to completing the scenario objectives. The three sample scenarios given in this article make use of these rules to shift the emphasis of the game from fighting to maneuvering and planning.

Capture the Flag

Under this scenario, a player must pick up an opponent's flag and carry it to his assembly tile. The first player to do so wins. This scenario uses the respawning rules given in the Respawning sidebar.

After arranging your terrain tiles but before placing your figures on your assembly tile you must put your flag somewhere on the board. You can place your flag on a terrain tile, although in most cases you should put it on your assembly tile to better defend it. However, a sacred circle or similar terrain tile near your assembly tile might prove a more defensible location.

The flag has no effect on movement, but a creature cannot end its movement on the flag. Use a marker of some sort, such as a coin or a damage counter, to note the flag's position. You should use two different counters or coins so you can keep each side's flag separate.

If a figure ends its movement adjacent to the flag, it can use a swift action to pick it up. A figure that carries the flag can drop it in any adjacent unoccupied space at any time during its movement as a swift action. Note that, since a figure has only one swift action per round, you cannot pick up and drop the flag in a single activation.

The figure carrying the flag cannot attack or cast spells. It can move at double speed, as normal for a figure that neither attacks nor uses a spell or special ability. While carrying the flag, a figure suffers a –2 penalty to AC as the flag interferes with its ability to defend itself.

If a figure is destroyed while carrying the flag, the flag remains in the last space occupied by that creature. If the creature is size Large or greater, the flag's owner decides in which space to place it.

If the figure carrying the flag routs, it immediately drops the flag in its current space before taking its rout movement.

If a creature steals a flag, its enemies are sharp enough to know that they must stop him. When targeting ranged attacks, spells, and other abilities, a creature can choose to target the nearest enemy or ally, or it can target the creature with the flag if it has line of sight to him.

A creature cannot pick up its own flag and move with it. You can only pick up and move your opponent's flag. Optionally, you can disregard this rule. However, you might find that the game takes too long without this rule as both sides make runs with the flag, only to watch an opponent carry it all the way back to his assembly tile or some other defensible location if the original flag carrier is slain.

A flag is considered captured if an opponent carries it to one of his assembly tile's exit spaces. The game ends with the capturing side the victor. To extend the game, one side must capture three flags in order to win. When a flag is captured, its original owner immediately replaces it on any unoccupied space, including terrain tiles, on the map.

For multiplayer games, the first person to capture a flag from each opponent wins the game. The original owner of a captured flag immediately places it anywhere on the board and play continues.

Aside from the noted changes, use all the rules given for the standard scenario.

Standard Bearer *Lord Soth*

Dungeonball

The forces of chaos, law, evil, and good aren't always at each other's throats with spell and sword. Sometimes they like to take a break and engage in some good old-fashioned athletics. In Dungeonball, the object of the game is to kick a ball through an opponent's exit squares.

Dungeonball is a full-contact sport. Use all of the rules for D&D Miniatures except as noted here. This variant uses the respawning rules (see the Respawning sidebar). While Dungeonball is violent, murdering your opponent is considered rude. Save that for the battlefield.

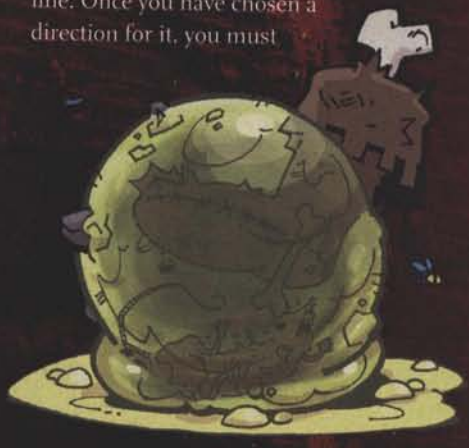
The Dungeonball scenario uses the standard rules for set up with two exceptions. First, the square at the center of the map must remain free of walls or other obstructions that block movement. Second, no terrain tile can be placed within four squares of an assembly tile. Once both sides have set up their warbands on their assembly tiles, place a coin, counter, or other marker in the map's center square. This is the ball: a squishy, bouncy sphere scooped from a gelatinous cube.

The object of the game is to score points by smacking the ball through an opponent's goal. Each side's goal is represented by the exit squares on its assembly tile.

To hit the ball, a figure must make a melee attack against it. The ball's AC is 15. On a successful hit, the ball gains a movement equal to half the damage dealt to it. You can move the ball as if it was a figure you control with a couple of important exceptions.

If the ball enters a creature's square, that creature must make a DC 15 save, or suffer 5 damage as the ball smacks into it. A creature gains a +4 bonus on this save for each size category below Medium and a –4 penalty for each category above Medium. A creature need only make this save once per activation. If the ball hits it more than once, such as if it travels through two spaces occupied by a Large creature, the target makes only one save.

The ball always travels in a straight line. Once you have chosen a direction for it, you must



continue moving it in that direction.

The ball ignores difficult terrain and all other terrain effects with one exception. If the ball must enter a square occupied by a wall or some other terrain that blocks movement, it bounces. If the ball bounces, every player in the game rolls 1d20. The high roller picks the ball's new direction and the ball continues in that direction until all of its movement is used up or it encounters another wall. In case of a tie for the highest roll, the ball bounces back in the direction it came.

Longtooth Barbarian

Each time the ball enters an exit square on an opponent's assembly tile, you score a point. After scoring a point, place the ball back at the center of the map immediately before your opponent's next activations. If you have additional activations to use, resolve them before placing the ball.

To keep the game from running too long, you can play until one side scores three points. You can vary the winning point total for a shorter or longer game.

The Great Race

In this variant scenario, you must send a single figure around the board to each terrain tile. The first player to complete a circuit wins. This scenario uses the respawning rules.

Use the rules for the standard scenario to set up the terrain tiles. In addition, each player places a token of some sort on each tile. These tokens mark your progress in the race, and each player should have a set that is distinct from his opponent's tokens.

After placing your figures on your assembly tile, you must pick one as your runner. The runner cannot make ranged or melee attacks, but he can use his other abilities and spells as normal. This figure cannot have the ability to *dimension door* or have a speed greater than 8. The chosen figure also gains a +4 AC bonus against attacks of opportunity. When the runner enters a terrain tile, collect the race token that you placed on it.

Crow Shaman

With the respawn rules in effect, your runner comes back into play if he is destroyed. If you lose your runner, you keep the tokens you have collected. In some cases, killing off a runner might make it easier for the runner to reach a terrain tile he has not yet visited.

The first player to collect a full set of tokens wins. Remember to set aside tokens for each assembly tile.

As an optional rule, you can allow figures with ranged attacks or spells to target the closest ally, closest enemy, or the runner if he is within line of sight. This rule tends to make the game run longer, since the runner must cope with lots of spells and ranged attacks, but the respawning rules guarantee that each side's spells slowly wear down. It also places a greater value on figures capable of making these attacks.

Other Scenarios

The rules for respawning cause some important changes to how D&D Miniatures works. Spells become less effective, as the miniatures they destroy return to play in a few turns. Figures with unlimited use abilities suddenly become far more valuable as they can contribute throughout the entire game. Remember, a figure retains all special effects and states placed upon it.

Big Versus Little: One 100-point warband is built with figures that cost 10 or fewer points, save for one commander who may cost up to 25 points. This warband gains the benefits of the respawning rules. The other warband is built with 200 points and may spend no fewer than 20 points on a single figure. The 200-point warband must destroy 200 points of opponents in order to win, while the 100-point player wins if he destroys 100 or more points of his enemy's figures.

Endless Hordes: In this variant, figures with a point cost of 5 or fewer gain the benefits of the respawning rules. You can throw endless numbers of Orc Warriors or Gnolls at your opponent, slowly wearing down his stronger miniatures.

Last Stand: One side starts with its assembly tile in the center of the map, the other places its assembly tile as normal. The warband that sets up in the middle is the defender, while all other warbands are attackers. All figures in the defender's warband gain the fearless ability. The attackers gain the benefits of the respawning rules but suffer a –4 penalty on all morale saves. The defender wins if he routs or destroys figures with a point cost equal to the cost of his warband.

Dire Rat

Teleportation Chaos: Use the standard scenario. Play until one player destroys figures with a point cost equal to half the starting warband point total, and then, whenever a figure routs or is destroyed, use the rules for respawning with one exception. A respawned figure appears on a terrain tile chosen at random, including the assembly tiles. After determining the tile that the figure appears on, its controller places it on any unoccupied space. Large and bigger miniatures must occupy at least one space on the tile. This added chaos makes figures with the executioner's blade special ability quite potent, as a lot of figures end up out of command when they respawn onto the battlefield.

Wyvern

by Andy Collins
illustrated by Niklas Janssen

OFFICIAL ANSWERS TO YOUR QUESTIONS

This month, the Sage addresses a number of questions relating to actions of all kinds. You can email the Sage with your questions at sageadvice@paizo.com.

How long does it take to draw a projectile weapon? The *Player's Handbook* says that drawing a weapon is a move action. Is this limited to weapons that are "drawn" from a sheath or scabbard, or to any weapon on the creature's person that is not in a sealed container?

The game rules do not differentiate between melee, thrown, or projectile weapons as far as defining the action required to draw them. A longsword, dagger, greataxe, or longbow each require a move action to draw, or may be drawn for free as part of a regular move by a character with a base attack bonus of +1 or greater.

If a weapon is stored in a container (such as a backpack or a *bag of holding*), then it is retrieved as if it were a stored item (a move action that provokes attacks of opportunity).

Does drawing a wand from a wand sheath provoke attacks of opportunity or can I draw it as if it were a weapon? If I have Quick Draw can I draw a wand as a free action?

As described on page 142 of the *Player's Handbook*, the "draw a weapon" action also applies to weaponlike objects carried in easy reach, such as wands. (The Sage would suggest that magic rods and staffs also fall into this category.) Thus, drawing a wand doesn't provoke attacks of opportunity, and a character with Quick Draw could draw one as a free action.

Wands and rods (but not staffs) also fall into the category of "light or one-handed weapons" for the purpose of drawing them in conjunction with the Two-Weapon Fighting feat (see page 142 of the *Player's Handbook*).

In a previous column, the Sage ruled that switching weapons from one hand to the other should take a move action. My group and I thought that seemed pretty long, since it's only a free action to drop something. Why can't you just drop it into your other hand?

It's not really true that switching weapons from one hand to another is just like dropping a weapon. When you drop a weapon, you're releasing it and letting it drop to the ground, with no real guidance (or attention) as to exactly where it lands. Switching a weapon from one hand to another is certainly more complex than simply dropping it. At the very least, switching hands would require you to use one hand to take the weapon from the other and at most it involves using both hands together in a coordinated action. Either way that sounds a lot like drawing a weapon, which is a move action. When you simply drop a weapon, you don't really care where it lands, and it doesn't require you to use the other hand to guide the action.

I was planning on playing a dwarf ranger with a crossbow, but ran into a quandary. The description of a light crossbow says it normally takes a standard action to reload. Does this mean you can only fire a light crossbow once every other round? How does this affect the use of the Rapid Shot feat, or multiple attacks earned for higher levels?

It appears that you're misreading the light crossbow description. Loading a light crossbow requires a move action—not a standard action—and provokes attacks of opportunity, as described in the weapon's description on page 115 and in Table 8–2: Actions

in Combat in the *Player's Handbook*. Thus, you can fire a light crossbow once every round as long as you spend your move action to reload it.

You can't fire a light crossbow more than once per round (whether due to a high base attack bonus or the Rapid Shot feat) unless you are capable of reloading the crossbow as a free action (such as with a repeating crossbow or with the Rapid Reload feat). Once this requirement is met, you can fire a light crossbow as many times per round as you could fire a bow (once per attack granted by your base attack bonus, with one additional attack if you have Rapid Shot).

The boomerang in *Complete Warrior* says that I have to make an attack roll to catch it when it returns to me. Does this require an action? What about when I'm trying to catch other objects, such as a potion thrown to me by my ally? Do I need to make an attack roll, and if so, what kind of action is required (if any)?

Since the boomerang's description doesn't indicate that an action is required, you can assume that it doesn't require one. In this case—somewhat like the returning weapon property in the *Dungeon Master's Guide*—the act of catching the boomerang is considered to be part and parcel of throwing it in the first place.

The game rules don't really handle the specific issue of catching an object thrown to you by an ally, but we can extrapolate from the information in the *Player's Handbook* and other sources to propose a simple method of adjudicating this.

Using the boomerang as an example, it would appear that an attack roll is necessary to catch a typical object. This is a melee touch attack, but it should add the catching character's Dexterity modifier rather than Strength modifier.

An object's AC is 10 + Dexterity modifier (typically –5 for 0 Dex) + its size modifier (see Table 8–1: Size Modifiers on page 134 the *Player's Handbook*). A potion (size Fine) would have an AC of 13, while an unconscious halfling rogue lobbed to you would have an AC of 6.

Most importantly, catching an object thrown to you requires a standard action. Since you're likely doing this on another character's turn, you'll probably have to ready an action to do so.

Of course, this only covers catching something thrown to you, not at you. Most characters don't have any ability to catch something thrown at them (such as a dagger or a big rock), although certain feats (such as Snatch Arrow) may allow this.

Can you take a free action and a standard action as part of a readied action? Suppose I ready an action to attack the first monster to come into melee range. When one does I take an attack—can I also shout, cast a quickened spell, or use some other free action?

Using a strict reading of the ready rules (see page 160 of the *Player's Handbook*), the answer is no. While the ready action allows you to combine a 5-foot step as part of the readied action, it doesn't say anything about allowing free actions.

Furthermore, the first sentence of the second paragraph under the Ready heading ("You can ready a standard action, a move action, or a free action.") seems to support this, as it clearly sets up a free action as one of the three options, rather than including it as an addition to be included along with either of the other two options.

Since speaking is generally defined as a free action you can perform "even when it isn't your turn" (see the *Player's Handbook*, page 144), you don't need to combine a shout with the readied action. You can simply perform it any time you want, including right before or after taking a readied action. The same is true of any spell (or action) that you can cast (or perform) when it isn't your turn, such as casting *feather fall*, or any spell with a casting time of 1 immediate action. (The immediate action is defined in several recent rulebooks, including *Complete Arcane* and the *Expanded Psionics Handbook*. It is reprinted here for your reference.) You couldn't cast a quickened spell, though, as that can't be done when it isn't your turn.

IMMEDIATE ACTION

Much like a swift action, an immediate action consumes a very small amount of time, but represents a larger expenditure of effort and energy than a free action. However, unlike a swift action, an immediate action can be performed at any time—even if it is not your turn. Using an immediate action on your turn is the same as using a swift action, and counts as your swift action for that turn. You cannot use another immediate action or a swift action until after your next turn if you have used an immediate action when it is not currently your turn (effectively, using an immediate action before your turn is equivalent to using your swift action for the coming turn). You also cannot use an immediate action if you are currently flat-footed.

According to the *Epic Level Handbook*, a DC 35 Tumble check allows a character to stand up from prone as a free action (instead of a move action). Does this provoke attacks of opportunity? What happens if the check fails? How does it differ from the thief-acrobat prestige class's "kip up" class feature?

The "free stand" action described in the *Epic Level Handbook* and repeated in *Complete Adventurer* still provokes attacks of opportunity as normal. If the check fails, the character still stands up but must spend a move action to do so. (This is similar to the fast mount or dismount action given in the Ride skill description in the *Player's Handbook*.) If the character does not have a move action remaining, she remains prone.

As originally described in *Song & Silence*, the "kip up" class feature was silent on whether the act provoked attacks of opportunity and thus it must be assumed that it doesn't change the normal rules for standing up from prone. However, the new thief-acrobat prestige class description in *Complete Adventurer* stipulates that this action does not provoke attacks of opportunity,

and takes precedence over the older version. It also doesn't require any kind of check on the thief-acrobat's part.

Is it possible for an attack of opportunity to provoke an attack of opportunity? For example, a fighter attempts to trip a cleric. The cleric chooses to make a sunder attack against the fighter's weapon as his attack of opportunity. Does the sunder attack then provoke an attack of opportunity from the fighter?

Yes. An attack of opportunity is adjudicated just like any other attack, and is subject to the same rules (including provoking additional attacks of opportunity). If this starts to confuse you, just remember that D&D combat is an abstract representation of battle, and not necessarily a precise second-by-second representation of every maneuver. Even the "sequential" nature of D&D combat—I make my attacks, then you make your attacks, then I make my attacks, and so forth—is an artificial creation used to keep combat moving quickly.

Using the example you provide, the fighter is indeed allowed to make an attack of opportunity against the cleric. (This attack could, in turn, provoke yet another attack of opportunity from the cleric, but the cleric could only make such an attack if he were allowed more than one attack of opportunity in a single round.)

These attacks are performed in a "last in, first out" sequence. The last attack of opportunity declared is the first one resolved, with the remaining attacks resolved in reverse order of their declaration, assuming the character is still capable of making the attack. If the fighter drops the cleric with his attack of opportunity, the rest of the attacks in the sequence—including the cleric's attack of opportunity and the fighter's original trip attack—do not occur. The actions are still "spent," however—the fighter doesn't get to use that original attack on some other target (although if he has other attacks remaining he may take them as normal).

How long does it take for an untrained person to apply poison to a blade, while having a 5% chance to poison themselves? Additionally, how long does it take someone trained with poison, like an assassin?

Applying a poison to a weapon is the same kind of action as applying an oil: a standard action. This remains the same whether or not the character can apply poison without risk to himself. The ninja class that appears in *Complete Adventurer* gains the ability at 9th level to apply poison as a move action.

When in doubt, if a task requires using or activating something, it's probably at least a standard action (and might be a full-round action). Most move actions either involve actual movement of the character (such as walking, climbing, or standing up) or moving an item (such as drawing a weapon, closing a door, or retrieving a stored item). That isn't a hard-and-fast rule of the game, but it's a useful tool to evaluate corner cases that aren't handled by Table 8–2: Actions in Combat on page 141 of the *Player's Handbook*.

Dragon

328 AD INDEX

PRODUCT	PAGE
Animal Planet	Inside back cover
Cardlings	Gamer Guide
Cloud Kingdom	15, Gamer Guide
Code Monkey Publications	63
Crystal Caste	13
Dancing Dragon	Gamer Guide
Dork Storm Press	58
Fiery Dragon	Gamer Guide
Goodman Games	Gamer Guide
Green Dragon	Gamer Guide
Hit Pointe	Gamer Guide
Just BY Design	Gamer Guide
Malhavoc Press	25, 39
Mongoose Publishing	21, 77
Morrigan Press	45
NC Soft	Back cover
OffWorld Design	Gamer Guide
Origins	19
Pandahead	Gamer Guide
Rakham	70
Random House	11
Reality Simulations	59
Reaper Miniatures	Inside front cover, 3
Sci-Fi Book Club	Between 34 & 35
Star Wars Celebration	9
Strategicon	Gamer Guide
Troll Lords	Gamer Guide
White Wolf	37

by Michael Trice

BARBARIC MOUNTS

BARBARIAN

No warrior cries out more for a primal link to an exotic mount than the barbarian. Choosing the appropriate mount for your barbarian can be essential when evolving a character concept into an integral and flavorful element of a campaign. One method to create memorable mounts is to take existing creatures from the *Monster Manual* and alter them slightly into more personalized choices.

A barbarian might gain one of the following mounts with the aid of a druid or ranger, or by capturing such a creature when it is young and raising it as a mount.

Ape, Snow: A more docile alternative to a polar bear, these enormous coastal primates can make imposing arctic mounts. Use the normal ape statistics for the snow ape, but advance it to 8 HD and change its environment to any cold.

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a snow ape is up to 306 pounds; a medium load, 307–612 pounds; and a heavy load, 613–920 pounds. A snow ape can drag 4,600 pounds.

Elephant Seal: A mount with land and water versatility, the elephant seal possesses the size of its terrestrial namesake while remaining extremely agile in the ocean. Use the orca whale statistics, but add a base land speed of 20 feet. Elephant seals only make effective mounts for campaigns that take place partly or wholly in aquatic environments.

Carrying Capacity: A light load for an elephant seal is up to 1,384 pounds; a medium load, 1,385–2,772 pounds; and a heavy load, 4,160 pounds. An elephant seal can drag 20,800 pounds.

Komodo Dragon: This is an ideal mount for tropical warriors, especially appropriate for lizardmen or other reptilian barbarians. Use the crocodile statistics, but exchange its Hold Breath ability for a diseased bite.

Diseased Bite (Ex): Filth fever—bite, Fortitude DC 13, incubation period 1d3 days, damage 1d3 Dex and 1d3 Con. The save DC is Constitution-based.

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a komodo dragon is up to 174 pounds; a medium load, 175–349 pounds; and a heavy load, 350–525 pounds. A komodo dragon can drag 2,625 pounds.

Moray Eel: This aquatic mount for Small creatures can be every bit as vicious as a shark. Moray eels only make effective mounts for campaigns that take place partly or wholly in aquatic terrain. See the Moray Eel sidebar for this creature's statistics.

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a moray eel is up to 43 pounds; a medium load, 44–86 pounds; and a heavy load, 130 pounds.

Vulture, Giant: A great choice for humanoids and desert barbarians who want an intimidating mount, the giant vulture offers considerable mobility along with its terrifying appearance. Use the giant eagle statistics but replace the evasion special quality with scent and reduce its Intelligence to 2.

Carrying Capacity: A light load for a giant vulture is up to 300 pounds; a medium load, 301–600 pounds; and a heavy load, 601-900 pounds.

Moray Eel: CR 1; Medium animal (aquatic); HD 2d8+2; hp 11; Init +3; Spd swim 60 ft.; AC 14 (+3 Dex, +1 natural), touch 13, flat-footed 11; Base Atk +1; Grp +6; Atk or Full Atk +4 melee (1d6+3/19–20, bite); SA improved grab, powerful bite; SQ low-light vision; AL N; SV Fort +4, Ref +6, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 17, Con 12, Int 1, Wis 12, Cha 2.

Skills: Hide +10 (+18 in reefs and caves), Move Silently +5, Swim +9.

Feats: Stealthy, Weapon Finesse[B].

Improved Grab (Ex): To use this ability, a moray eel must hit with its bite attack. It can then attempt to start a grapple as a free action without provoking an attack of opportunity. If it wins the grapple check, it establishes a hold. Moray eels gain a +4 racial bonus on grapple checks.

Powerful Bite (Ex): The moray eel gains a +2 racial bonus on damage rolls with its bite attack, and threatens a critical hit on a 19–20.

by Hal Maclean

HEAVY METAL

BARD

Picture a bard strolling through the dungeon safely wrapped in the thickest, heaviest suit of plate mail imaginable. Unlike other arcane spellcasters, a bard in armor is far from helpless and rarely a burden to the rest of the party. Pulling it off properly just requires a little planning and forethought.

Getting Dressed

Bards start out proficient with light armor and shields. In order to access the more effective armors you must take the feats Medium Armor Proficiency and Heavy Armor Proficiency. A human bard could do this at 1st level, although it's more practical for bards of all races to take a level of fighter or another class that grants these feats as a class feature. The cost of these sorts of armor puts them out of reach of 1st-level characters anyway, initially making these feats unnecessary.

Consider putting your second-highest ability in something besides Dexterity and choose character skills accordingly. Armor carries with it a maximum Dexterity bonus and a penalty to many Dexterity-based skills. Intelligence offers bonus languages and skill points—both very useful in nearly any campaign. A high Intelligence also grants a bonus on Appraise, Decipher Script, and Knowledge checks, all potentially quite handy in a dungeon. Strength and Constitution, on the other hand, make you a better melee fighter.

I Sing of Secrets

Bardic knowledge functions no matter what sort of armor you are wearing. Your party should always give you a chance to puzzle over objects, obstacles, and NPCs for a moment or two to see if your vast knowledge base of stories, legends, and common gossip offers any advantage. For instance, if you know that a particular noble always uses elves as couriers you would quickly recognize a dwarven messenger as an imposter. Similarly, if you know that the wizards of the Red Hydra cult always ward their doors with *fire trap* spells be sure to offer a warning to the rest of the party.

Also unaffected by armor, bardic music allows you to help your party through all sorts of rough spots. Many of its effects last until you stop performing and you can even engage in combat while singing. This means you could theoretically inspire courage, inspire greatness, or inspire heroics for many long hours.

Spell Strategy

Unlike other class abilities, wearing armor hinders your spellcasting due to the chance of arcane spell failure (although, unique among the arcane classes, you may wear light armor without penalty). However, by carefully selecting the right spells you can significantly reduce this problem.

Arcane spell failure only applies to spells with somatic components, so pick spells without such components as often as possible. Eighteen spells on the bard spell list lack somatic components, giving you plenty of options (see the Bard Spells Without Somatic Components sidebar).

As another option, take the feat Still Spell. Since this feat increases your casting time to at least a round and bumps up the spell a level use it sparingly and never in combat. However, your party won't complain when it takes you a little longer to cast *cure light wounds*, *heroism*, or *remove curse*.

Finally, never forget the usefulness of wands. They are spell trigger items, making armor irrelevant. Wands containing curative spells make you a great backup for the cleric. The ability to cast enhancing spells like *cat's grace* or *haste* while on an adventure can make you the most popular member of the party.

BARD SPELLS WITHOUT SOMATIC COMPONENTS

Level	Spell
0	*flare, light*
1st	*feather fall, ventriloquism*
2nd	*blindness/deafness, blur, darkness hypnotic pattern, suggestion*
3rd	*displacement, gaseous form, lesser geas*
4th	*dimension door, rainbow pattern, shout*
5th	*mass suggestion*
6th	*geas/quest, Otto's irresistible dance*

by Erik Seligman

PERIPHERAL BELIEFS

Religions are steeped in dogma and traditions. The dogma of a religion almost always comes directly from the deities whom the religion reveres. Traditions, on the other hand, sometimes form for reasons that have little to do with the faith's deity.

This article presents five sample peripheral beliefs, from which you may choose up to two. If a cleric violates a belief for any reason he loses its benefit until he receives an *atonement* spell.

Daily Prayer

At specific times of day, you must perform a prayer while facing a specific direction.

Restrictions: You must stop to pray at the appropriate times, regardless of your current situation. Most deities require at least three 5-minute prayers each day (dawn, noon, and sunset) but stricter lawful deities may also require prayers at mid-morning and mid-afternoon.

Benefits: Since you must always face the proper direction while praying, you can automatically discern true north as if you had 5 ranks in Survival. If you already have 5 ranks in Survival you gain a +2 bonus on all Survival checks instead.

Day of Rest

Every seventh day, you must refrain from all physical activity, regardless of whether you are in town, on the road, or in the dungeon.

Restrictions: On the designated day, you cannot take attack actions, cast spells with somatic components, activate mechanical devices, or carry a load heavier than light.

Benefits: Due to being especially well-rested, you gain a +4 bonus on all saves made against sleep effects and you do not suffer a –10 penalty when making Listen checks while asleep.

Dietary Restriction

You believe a certain kind of food—such as all meat from a certain kind of animal or from any animal not slain in a specific way—is unclean. Any utensils or dishes used with unclean food themselves become unclean and taint any other food they touch.

Restrictions: Any food prepared by someone other than a devout follower of the religion, or any potion that is not created by the cleric, violate these standards of cleanliness. (A *detect poison* spell can detect these foods, since the cleric perceives such fare as spiritual poison.)

Benefits: Due to the careful choice of foods, the cleric is especially healthy and gains a +1 bonus on Fortitude saves against poisons and diseases.

Sacred Animal

You consider some particular kind of animal sacred, such as cats, cows, or birds. You cannot harm or impede a sacred animal in any way and you must attempt to prevent others from harming or impeding one.

Restrictions: You cannot attack the sacred creature, even in self-defense. If your allies choose to attack such a creature in self-defense, you must ensure the creature survives, such as binding its wounds once it goes unconscious. If your allies are the aggressors, you cannot cast beneficial spells on them for 24 hours after the combat ends.

Benefits: Animals of the sacred kind feel a special affinity for you and instinctively avoid attacking you unless in self-defense or under magical compulsion (this benefit does not extend to your allies). In addition, you gain a +4 bonus on all Charisma-based skill checks when interacting with such creatures.

Sacred Clothing

You must wear some particular item of clothing that takes up a magic item slot, such as a head covering or a ceremonial glove, at all times.

Restrictions: Since the special clothing must be both worn and displayed as a show of devotion, you cannot cover up or remove it. This often means you must forego use of magic items that would be worn in that slot. It might also cause you to commit violations of etiquette in social situations.

Benefits: The special item of clothing is of masterwork quality and costs at least 25 gp. Wearing it grants you a +2 bonus on Charisma-based skill checks when dealing with other followers of your religion and it may be enhanced using normal magic item creation rules. A set of armor or other item that grants you benefits cannot count as your sacred clothing.

CLERIC

by Richard Farrese

THE STORM DRUID

DRUID

Although druids usually share a common goal, one radical group of druids is unlike any other. While the majority of druids attract and befriend animals, these protectors of nature actually repel living creatures. Forming an exclusive and somewhat unpopular branch of the druid class, these druids adapt the unpredictable temperament of powerful storms.

The storm druid is a variant druid. Unless otherwise noted, a storm druid advances in the same manner as a regular druid (same Hit Die, base attack bonus, saving throw bonuses, skill points, and so on). When a character elects to take a level of druid or storm druid, she may not later take levels in the other class. This prevents the character from gaining the benefits of a 1st-level druid twice. Storm druids are almost universally chaotic neutral.

Class Features

All of the following are class features of the storm druid. A storm druid retains the druid's spellcasting ability as well as nature sense (1st level), resist nature's lure (4th level), venom immunity (9th level), a thousand faces (13th level), and timeless body (14th level). She loses all other druid class abilities, including wild shape and acquiring an animal companion.

Spontaneous Casting: Unlike typical druids, the storm druid does not channel stored spell energy into *summon nature's ally* spells. Instead, she can "lose" a prepared spell (of equal or higher level) to cast a spell from the following list, provided she can cast spells of the appropriate level: 1st—*obscuring mist;* 2nd—*gust of wind;* 3rd—*call lightning;* 4th—*air walk;* 5th—*call lightning storm;* 6th—*chain lightning;* 7th—*control weather;* 8th—*whirlwind;* 9th—*storm of vengeance.*

Deafness Immunity (Su): At 1st level, the storm druid becomes totally immune to deafness, magical or otherwise.

Frightful Presence (Ex): A storm druid of 2nd level or higher can unsettle animals with her mere presence. The ability takes effect whenever the druid attacks or charges. Animals within a radius of 30 feet are subject to the effect if they have fewer HD than the druid.

A potentially affected animal that succeeds on a Will save (DC 10 + 1/2 druid level + druid's Charisma modifier) remains immune to that druid's frightful presence for 24 hours. On a failed save, the animal becomes shaken for 4d6 rounds. Animal companions and familiars of the storm druid's allies ignore his frightful presence.

At 8th level, the storm druid's frightful presence also affects magical beasts, fey, and vermin.

At 16th level, the storm druid's frightful presence affects creatures of all types.

Thunder Strike (Su): Once per day, a storm druid of 2nd level or higher can discharge a powerful electrical jolt that also creates a thunderclap with a successful melee attack. The storm druid must declare her intent to use this ability before she makes her attack. If successful, she deals an additional 1d6 points of electricity damage and forces her opponent to make a Fortitude save (DC 10 + 1/2 storm druid level + Constitution modifier) or become deafened for 3d6 rounds. A failed attack still consumes one use of this ability.

The storm druid can use this ability once per day at 2nd level, and one additional time per day at 6th, 11th, 15th, and 20th level. This ability cannot be used more than once per round.

At 11th level, the electrical damage increases to 2d6.

At 15th level, the deafness caused by this ability is permanent.

At 20th level, the electrical damage increases to 4d6.

Wind Sense (Ex): As she gains experience, the storm druid learns to read air currents and instinctively reacts to slight shifts in the wind, such as those created by a moving object or spell effect. At 3rd level, she gains a +1 insight bonus on all Reflex saving throws. This bonus increases to +2 at 9th level and +3 at 15th level.

Electricity Resistance (Su): At 5th level, the storm druid gains resistance to electricity 5. This resistance increases by 5 for every 5 additional storm druid levels (resistance 10 at 10th level, 15 at 15th, and 20 at 20th).

Improved Initiative: At 12th level, the storm druid gains the Improved Initiative feat.

by Troy E. Taylor

THE ROMAN LEGIONNAIRE

FIGHTER

The foot soldier of the Roman legions was the best-equipped fighter of his era. He carried a javelin, a short sword, a dagger, and for protection wore a helmet, banded mail, and a shield. The model of the Roman soldier is one worth emulating. That's especially true if your character has a background in the legions of a nation with similarities to the Roman Empire, such as Nyrond or Ahlissa in GREYHAWK or Karrnath in EBERRON.

This article presents a few suggestions for adapting the legionnaire model to your character or campaign.

LEGIONNAIRE CHARACTERS

A legionnaire needs excellent physical ability scores. Average folk need not apply. Durability is everything, so a high Constitution proves essential. An army of the toughest and hardiest fighters has the best chance of making long marches, surviving battles, and holding conquered territories. A legionnaire's Strength should be at least 14 in order to carry the 116 pounds of gear he commonly carries as a medium load. A legionnaire can survive with a Dexterity score as low as 10, but needs at least a 12 in order to excel.

Where the legionnaire puts his mental ability scores depends on what he wants from the military life. A high Intelligence, which applies to Knowledge (engineering) checks, can get the soldier promoted as an engineer. A high Wisdom helps anybody, as it adds to Will saves. Finally, a Charisma bonus aids a legionnaire who aspires to command.

The historical foot soldier—superstitious, stubborn, and prideful—distrusted magic. This makes less sense in a fantasy campaign, but it makes for an interesting twist. Due to this superstition, a legionnaire should look to improve his arsenal with weapons of masterwork quality. That is especially true of his short sword and dagger, which the Roman soldier knew as the finely-crafted gladius and pugio—blades of expert Spanish design. A low-level character might have to start with scale mail because of its affordability, then look to add the legionnaire's staple: a jacket of masterwork banded mail.

MARIUS'S MULES

Gaius Marius (155-86 B.C.E.), general and six-time consul of Rome, did much to standardize Rome's legions, prescribing much of the gear each soldier needed to be self-sufficient. This earned them the name Marius' Mules. Some items listed, such as the metal jacket of banded mail, were invented later but became standard issue. The equipment carried by a typical Roman Legionnaire is presented here.

Item	Weight
Arms	
Gladius (short sword)	3 lb.
Pilum (javelin)	2 lb.
Pugio (dagger)	1 lb.
Banded mail jacket and bronze helmet	35 lb.
Large wood shield with metal plating	15 lb.
Gear	
Backpack	2 lb.
Bronze cook pot	10 lb.
Canvas bag	1 lb.
Dolabra (hoe)	8 lb.
Leather water bottle (full)	4 lb.
Mattock	10 lb.
Netting	1 lb.
Rations for 3 days	3 lb.
Shaving razor and soap	1 lb.
Sickle or saw	5 lb.
Spare change of clothes	3 lb.
Sponge	—
10-foot tent pole	8 lb.
Wicker basket	1 lb.
Woolen cloak	3 lb.
Total Weight	116 lb.

by Mike Mearls

THE MULTICLASSED MONK

MONK

As a monk, taking a second class is a serious investment. Since you cannot return to this class after taking a level in another core class, you have two options. You can either take your secondary class first, then adopt the monk class, or take as many levels of monk as you want before leaving it. Most of the time, it makes little sense to enter a new core class after gaining four or five levels in monk. Thus, this article focuses on classes that you can dip into before progressing as a monk.

When taking a second class, the choice often comes down to how much you value the class's abilities. Empty body can be useful, but you can gain the use of etherealness via magic items. Perfect self's damage reduction might seem tempting, but at that high a level most monsters can slice through it anyway. Timeless body and tongue of the sun and moon are two abilities whose utility depends on the nature of your campaign. In a combat-intensive game, you probably spend more time punching things than talking to them or waiting around to get old. However, *ki* strike is too valuable to give up at higher levels, giving you four levels at most to devote to other core classes.

Barbarian and Bard: Since these classes forbid lawful characters from joining them, they aren't an option for a would-be monk.

Cleric, Druid, and Ranger: None of these classes offer enough to make them worth sacrificing monk abilities. You can already heal yourself via wholeness of body. The druid's wildshape talent makes it difficult, if not impossible, to take advantage of your unarmed fighting ability. The ranger has little to offer an unarmed warrior.

Fighter: Two levels of fighter yield two bonus feats, but levels beyond that provide too small a benefit to justify taking them. Improved Grapple, Power Attack, and Weapon Focus can all boost your unarmed fighting ability and make excellent uses of these bonus feats.

Paladin: This class has some potentially good combinations with monk, but it has its drawbacks. If you have a good Charisma, smite evil, divine grace, and lay on hands can serve as useful tools for a monk. Smite evil in particular can help your offense in a tight spot, while divine grace improves your already impressive saving throws.

The primary drawback you face is that you need a good Charisma. Unless the dice are kind to you, this option might not have much value. As a rule of thumb, you need a Charisma of at least 14 to make an investment in the paladin class worthwhile. At higher levels, be sure to invest in Charisma-boosting items to make the most of your paladin abilities.

Rogue: Between sneak attack and 8 skill ranks per level, the rogue has a lot to offer an aspiring monk. Sneak attack works well with the monk's superior speed and flurry of blows, while the extra skill ranks make you stealthier and more flexible. In addition, trapfinding is always a useful talent.

Sorcerer and Wizard: In most cases dipping into levels of arcane spellcasting classes is a waste of resources, but the monk is in a unique situation. A single level grants you access to *expeditious retreat*, *enlarge person*, *shield*, and *true strike*—spells that improve your fighting ability. Since you don't rely on armor, you can cast them without worry. *True strike* in particular is a great way to enhance your Stunning Fist feat, especially if you combine it with flurry of blows. You can cast *true strike*, hit an opponent with Stunning Fist, stun him, then follow up with your additional attacks against a stunned opponent.

You don't need a score higher than 11 to take advantage of the spells listed above, as none require saves. While sorcerer gives you more spells per day, the wizard class is more flexible. In general, a monk gains more from a high Intelligence than a high Charisma, but in the end you should base the choice on whether you want a couple of extra spells or a wider potential selection.

by Cristo Yañez

PALADIN DOMAINS

PALADIN

Most of the core classes provide many opportunities for variation. With a wide range of abilities, feats, and skills to chose from, the rules provide players with enough choices to round out a unique personality.

Of all the core classes, however, paladins have the least room for uniqueness. They have few skill points, and almost all paladins focus on the same skills: Diplomacy, Heal, Ride, and Sense Motive. Feats follow more or less the same pattern—Mounted Combat and its feat tree are practically must-haves because of the paladin's special mount class ability. While strict codes for combat and behavior are integral to a paladin's orderly life, players of paladins sometimes would like a little more variety in the class. The real problem ends up being deities. No matter which deity a paladin worships, her class abilities and spells are always the same. Why should a paladin of Ehlonna be the same as a paladin of Heironeous, or a paladin of Saint Cuthbert the same as one worshipping Yondalla?

The optional rule presented in this article offers paladins a greater variety of powers by making a simple change. In order to select a paladin domain, the paladin gives up her ability to turn undead at 3rd level and selects a domain from the list of paladin domains instead (see the Paladin Domains sidebar). The domain chosen must belong to the deity worshipped by the paladin. Paladin domains do not provide a list of bonus spells as do cleric domains, but they all feature an associated special ability based on the corresponding cleric domain.

PALADIN DOMAINS

While only Chaos and Evil are banned, paladins rarely select domains other than the ones listed here.

Death: You may use a special death ward effect as a standard action, giving you or a good-aligned creature you touch a bonus on all saves against death effects. This saving throw bonus equals your paladin level –2 and lasts for 1 minute. This granted power may be used a total number of times per day equal to 3 + your Charisma modifier. It is a supernatural ability.

Knowledge: You gain a special divine inspiration power. You may make a special divine inspiration check that functions exactly as a bard's bardic knowledge class ability, except that it is a supernatural ability. Your divine inspiration bonus is equal to your paladin level + your Charisma modifier, and is usable a number of times per day equal to 1 + your Charisma modifier.

Luck: Once per day, as an extraordinary ability, you may reroll one roll you have just made before the DM declares whether the roll results in success or failure. You must take the result of the second roll, even if it's worse than the first one.

Magic: You may use scrolls, wands, and other devices with spell completion or spell trigger activation as a wizard of half your paladin level. Any actual wizard levels you have stack with the effective wizard levels gained from this ability. Knowledge (arcana) and Spellcraft are class skills for you.

Protection: You can generate a protective ward as a supernatural ability. This protective ward grants you or someone you touch a resistance bonus equal to your paladin level –2 on the recipient's next saving throw. Activating this power is a standard action. The protective ward is an abjuration effect with a duration of 1 hour. It is usable once per day.

Strength: You can perform a feat of strength as a supernatural ability. You gain an enhancement bonus to your Strength score equal to your paladin level –2. Activating this power is a free action. It lasts 1 round, and is usable once per day.

War: You may invoke a special true warrior power as a supernatural ability, allowing you to bypass the damage reduction of any evil-aligned creature. Invoking the true warrior ability is a free action, but it must be activated before rolling your attack. Its effects last for 1 round, and you can invoke it once per day.

by Kieran Turley

ARRANGING THE RANGER

RANGER

The ranger class provides limited spellcasting ability that a cunning player might work into a significant advantage. This article examines the ranger's spell list and suggests some of the best options. A ranger can maximize his potential and usefulness to his party by choosing spells unavailable to other classes.

1st-Level Spells

Charm animal makes for one of the best choices on the 1st-level ranger spell list. This spell might turn a dangerous enemy such as a bear, wolf, or dire animal into a valuable addition to the party. Many animals appear in both natural and urban surroundings, this spell proves useful in many situations. It complements and is complemented by *speak with animals.*

Entangle is an incredibly useful combat spell. A ranger skilled in ranged combat should consider this spell one of his best friends, as it allows him extra time to use his ranged weapons while targets struggle to free themselves. *Entangle's* drawback is its use only in areas with ample vegetation.

Speak with animals proves useful in investigations where animals witnessed events and in finding out what animal companions saw while scouting. Most worlds teem with small animals such as mice that gladly give up their secrets or perform simple tasks in exchange for a little food.

2nd-Level Spells

Cat's grace and *bull's strength* boost the ranger's combat style of choice. These spells prove useful in a party where the main spellcasters of the group could more effectively focus on other types of spells.

Cure light wounds is a scout's best friend. Rangers frequently find themselves trapped far from the party cleric and in need of healing. In highly artificial environments where the ranger's spells are weakest, this spell provides a little extra boost to his usefulness.

Speak with plants proves an excellent choice for the same reasons as *speak with animals.* Information gathering is one of the ranger's strong points and this spell plays to that strength.

3rd-Level Spells

Neutralize poison and *remove disease* allow the ranger to bolster the party's resiliency. Taking these spells allows the party's cleric to prepare offensive and boosting spells.

Tree shape allows the ranger to camp alone without fear of attack and to conceal himself in plain sight. The spell makes a good choice for the ranger who spends a lot of time alone in the wilderness.

Water walk offers a great deal of versatility, providing the entire party with a means to cross everything from underground magma rivers to town canals.

4th-Level Spells

Commune with nature is incredibly useful in any natural setting. This spell might locate ancient temples and powerful enemies along with providing a great deal of additional information, allowing a ranger to perform his role as scout without ever leaving his tent. *Commune with nature* is the best information-gathering spell in the ranger's arsenal.

Freedom of movement allows the ranger to act as a warrior in a variety of hostile situations. Grapples, water, and webs no longer impede the ranger while under the influence of this spell, granting him freedom to attack as he wishes in situations that would cripple a common fighter.

Tree stride allows a ranger to cover a lot of ground quickly, to bypass enemies, to hide in plain sight, and to surprise enemies in battle. A shrewd ranger might think of additional uses for this versatile spell.

by Robert J. Hahn

ROGUE LAW

A casual glace at the rogue class description notes that they may have any alignment. However, the vast majority of rogues gravitate toward chaos. While the class does possess a number of larcenous skills and special abilities, many rogues employ them for upright and even lawful purposes. The class features a wide spectrum of archetypes beyond the simple thief, including the jaded street kid, the cunning spy, and the swashbuckling ladies' man.

Street Savior

The street savior grew up in the slums. He fought his way to the top of the back alley food chain through skill and talent. The street savior succeeds either through daring and finesse or bulk and brawn. Regardless of his personal style, the streets taught him hard lessons. He learned that his skills could serve more than petty greed and that he possessed the ability to help others.

Often, a street savior finds himself standing up for the little guy. A friend becomes the target of the local toughs and the street savior intervenes. He gains a reputation among the downtrodden as a man people turn to when they need help. Soon others look to him for leadership and a new gang emerges in the streets, fighting against the misfits, toughs, and petty criminals bringing down the community.

The street savior lives by a code of honor. He does the right thing at the right time, consequences bedamned. He sees the king's law as a guide, bending it when honor requires. A savior fights dirty, using every trick to win, yet discards his weapon when facing an unarmed opponent. He speaks honestly to friends and enemies, but bends the truth to save a life. The street savior's personal code separates him from the common criminals he confronts on a daily basis.

Royal Spy

The royal spy serves his liege with honor and devotion. He works outside the law in order to enforce it. The royal spy often serves his liege by gauging the populous. Unlike his master, the royal spy melds into the masses. His acumen with disguises mixed with his intimate knowledge of the local people and history allows him to blend in with the throngs as they go about their activities. The royal spy hears of discontent before it becomes rebellion, anger before it turns to riot, and despair before it grows into apathy.

Most royal spies begin their careers at an early age. Some come from the ranks of commoners, acting as go-betweens for the government and the common man. Others come from the nobility, posing as dandies while pilfering rivals' secrets. In either case, the young royal spy soon attracts the attention of his liege. Perhaps he picks the wrong noble's pocket or shows a penchant for finding places to eavesdrop.

A royal spy sees the world through colored lenses. His liege gives him the license to commit acts otherwise illegal in the eyes of the law: Theft, breaking and entering, forgery, and even murder become acceptable practice for the royal spy. For him, the ends justify the means.

Charming Knight

Some knights refuse to wear half-plate and carry a longsword. They come armed with nothing but their razor wit and an equally sharp rapier. These knights serve as personal guards and emissaries, traveling to places their armor-clad brethren cannot.

A charming knight masters the art of courtly courtesy. He knows etiquette, speaks multiple languages, banters words with the cleverest bard, and speedily disembowels an enemy before the battle even begins. The charming knight serves a cause, be it lord, country, or religion. Many begin their careers as fops and dandies. They tire of their flippant lifestyles and seek to dedicate themselves to something meaningful. They begin a new life the day they swear their oath of service.

The charming knight bases his understanding of the law on courtesy. He never battles an unarmed foe or ambushes an enemy. The charming knight never leaves a soul in need, no matter the personal cost.

by Richard Farrese

NOT YOUR TYPICAL SPELLCASTER

SORCERER

He wears a heavy, hooded robe of a dark green shade with wide sleeves trimmed in gold, giving him the look of a larger man. His stern visage, marked with wrinkles and cavernous eyes, bears a well-groomed black beard upon a narrow chin.

The image of the stern, untrustworthy, evil-looking sorcerer is a familiar one in fantasy literature and roleplaying games. Although they make popular villains, not all sorcerers are evil beings with delusions of grandeur or schemes to seize control of the world, nor do they all dress in dark cloaks or have pointed beards. The following descriptions suggest alternative outlooks for members of the sorcerer class.

"Her narrow, almond shaped eyes possess an eerie black luster with hints of sparkling reddish hues. She keeps most of her unruly blonde hair short, but many of the curly tangles fall to her shoulders. Her garb is composed of elaborate white robes covered in complex dark orange embroideries. A silver medallion in the form of a crescent moon is her only jewelry."

"His clean-shaven scalp bears many scars. A closer inspection reveals the marks to be deliberately made patterns. Under his wide nose grows a bushy beard from which many long locks of woven golden-brown hair protrude. His robe of heavy blue silk is as dirty as the skin of his arms and face. He grasps a long-hilted but battered iron trident."

"The woman moves as a cat; eerily halting and yet graceful. She keeps her dark hair neatly oiled and combed, which makes it unnaturally shiny in even the faintest light. Her diminutive features make the short, broad-bladed sword she wields appear particularly large, but her strong jaw and iron gaze suggest she is not one to be trifled with."

"Tall and lean, yet muscular and strong, his unscarred dark skin seems almost too smooth for a human. He wears only a loincloth and greaves made of reptilian skin. He carries a serrated spear, a bone knife, and an ancient bronze axe. Flaking paints of white and various ochres cover his head, torso, and thighs. His wide smile reveals surprisingly white but broken and somewhat jagged teeth."

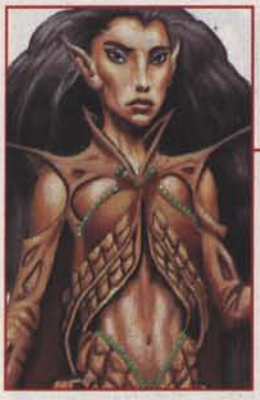
"Wide bronze rings hang from the woman's face, covering both her brows and most of her lower lip. The rings are thick and etched with designs of incomprehensible meaning, but they do not seem to bother her in the least. She wears pants made of crude bearskin, a furry vest of brown suede, and a cloak trimmed with red-fox fur. A leather cap topped with long feathers covers most of her head. Long brown locks falling to her shoulders issue from under it."

"A large tattoo of red and blue ink forms a mighty chimera upon his bare chest. While the heads of this creature seem to bite at the wide veins in his neck, its tail disappears in the ample leggings of yellow and purple tones that make up his only garment. Two wide-bladed falchions and several bulging leather pouches dangle from a simple black velvet belt."

"She dresses in a sumptuous scarlet robe that reveals both her slim figure and the deep runes painted in blood upon both her bare arms. Her straight hair, long and raven black, falls to the middle of her back. Her striking face hints at subtle nobility. The most remarkable feature about her, however, is the color of her eyes: one of fiery amber and the other an inky blue."

"He wears a massive bird skull as a helmet. Various colorful feathers adorn the skull, as do several painted swirling designs. Thick wolverine pelts hang off his shoulders, with the animals' heads covering his thin upper arms. Long, sinuous tattoos of blue and red snake down his arms."

by Richard Davis



WIZARDRY 101

WIZARD

The wizard is one of the most versatile characters of D&D, but for someone new to the class the choices available might seem a little daunting. Presented here are some ideas to help narrow down these decisions and ultimately help to create a better character.

Your Role: The first thing to consider when creating or playing a wizard is what role your character has in the game. At lower levels, you have few magical offensive abilities. If you plan to help in combat, think first about defense and then about ranged attacks. Also, think about non-combat spells that might help you and the party when you least expect it, such as *comprehend languages*, *mage hand*, or *rope trick*.

Skills and Feats: Consider which skills and feats you rely on most. You should always spend some skill points on the various Knowledge skills—especially Knowledge (arcana)—as well as Spellcraft. You need a high Concentration bonus if you plan to cast in combat or during other distracting situations. Other skill choices should reflect your character concept or any prestige class requirements you hope to meet. For instance, if your character follows a deity, Knowledge (religion) fits well.

Feats are also quite valuable due to their rarity. If you plan to often involve yourself in combat, Improved Initiative and Combat Casting remain standard and excellent choices. Also, consider those that increase your ability with weapons (especially ranged weapons) if you plan to rely on them. Such choices include Point Blank Shot and Weapon Focus. Remember that many feats applicable to ranged weapons also apply to ray spells. Mostly, though, you should think ahead to when your character has mastered magic and rarely uses physical weapons. As such, some solid choices for a wizard include metamagic feats and item creation feats. If you like to rely on a few favorite spells, metamagic feats can provide awesome power and flexibility. Wizards also excel at making their own magic items to help both themselves and the party. Keep in mind your option to sell and trade the items you make, as it might provide needed leverage for your character or the party.

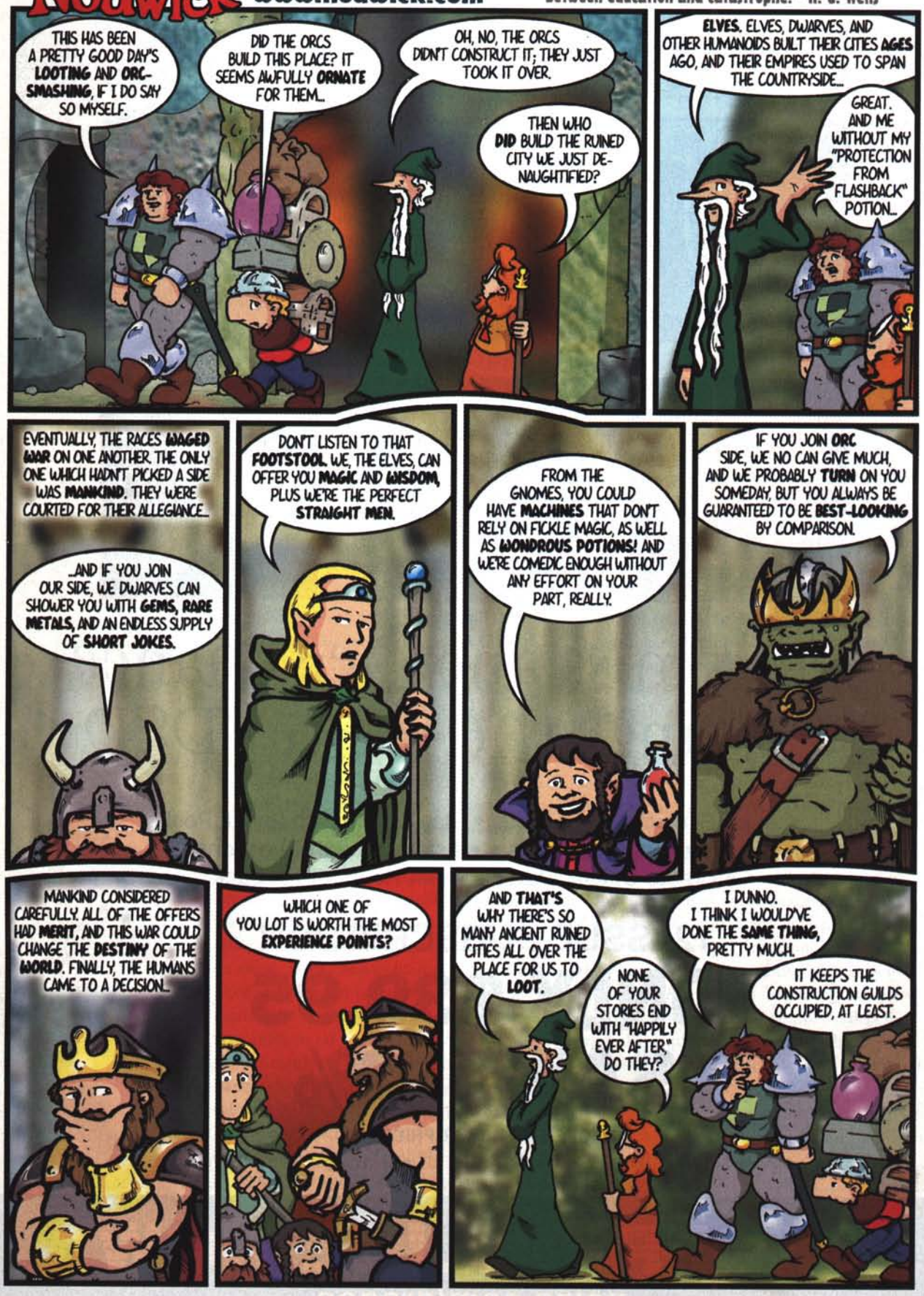
Spells: The wizard's main domain is definitely spells, but choosing just the right ones requires some planning and consideration about your character. Cantrips, although minor, come in handy at the most unexpected times. *Disrupt undead* and *ray of frost* whittle away at low-level enemies while *read magic* and *detect magic* inevitably see use over and over again. Of the 1st-level spells, *shield* and *mage armor* alone may keep you alive long enough to begin casting 2nd-level spells. Once combat starts you need to deal damage, therefore no better choices exist than *burning hands* and the ever-popular *magic missile*. These start small but grow more damaging as you progress in levels. Through 2nd- and 3rd-level spells, the most popular and frequently used include *dispel magic*, *fireball*, *fly*, *invisibility*, *knock*, *lightning bolt*, *see invisibility*, and *tongues*. As you gain levels, your choices should include *disintegrate*, *false life*, *haste*, and the various *magic circles*.

Equipment: As you gain levels and begin to acquire items, gems, and money, you should actively seek out scrolls whenever they are available. Don't forget other single-use or charged items. Wands and potions that use low-level spells can save your life. Good ones to look for include potions of *cure light wounds* and *cure moderate wounds*, along with wands of *detect magic* or *light*. If you cannot make good use of a particular magic item you should attempt to sell it, unless another party member wants it. Your ally might feel the need to thank you later—or better yet, use that item to keep you alive.

Nodwick

by Aaron Williams
www.nodwick.com

Human history becomes more and more a race between education and catastrophe. - H. G. Wells


THIS HAS BEEN A PRETTY GOOD DAY'S LOOTING AND ORC-SMASHING, IF I DO SAY SO MYSELF.
DID THE ORCS BUILD THIS PLACE? IT SEEMS AWFULLY ORNATE FOR THEM...
OH, NO, THE ORCS DIDN'T CONSTRUCT IT; THEY JUST TOOK IT OVER.
THEN WHO DID BUILD THE RUINED CITY WE JUST DE-NAUGHTIFIED?
ELVES. ELVES, DWARVES, AND OTHER HUMANOIDS BUILT THEIR CITIES AGES AGO, AND THEIR EMPIRES USED TO SPAN THE COUNTRYSIDE...
GREAT. AND ME WITHOUT MY "PROTECTION FROM FLASHBACK" POTION...
EVENTUALLY, THE RACES WAGED WAR ON ONE ANOTHER. THE ONLY ONE WHICH HADN'T PICKED A SIDE WAS MANKIND. THEY WERE COURTED FOR THEIR ALLEGIANCE...
...AND IF YOU JOIN OUR SIDE, WE DWARVES CAN SHOWER YOU WITH GEMS, RARE METALS, AND AN ENDLESS SUPPLY OF SHORT JOKES.
DON'T LISTEN TO THAT FOOTSTOOL. WE, THE ELVES, CAN OFFER YOU MAGIC AND WISDOM, PLUS WE'RE THE PERFECT STRAIGHT MEN.
FROM THE GNOMES, YOU COULD HAVE MACHINES THAT DON'T RELY ON FICKLE MAGIC, AS WELL AS WONDROUS POTIONS! AND WE'RE COMEDIC ENOUGH WITHOUT ANY EFFORT ON YOUR PART, REALLY.
IF YOU JOIN ORC SIDE, WE NO CAN GIVE MUCH, AND WE PROBABLY TURN ON YOU SOMEDAY, BUT YOU ALWAYS BE GUARANTEED TO BE BEST-LOOKING BY COMPARISON.
MANKIND CONSIDERED CAREFULLY. ALL OF THE OFFERS HAD MERIT, AND THIS WAR COULD CHANGE THE DESTINY OF THE WORLD. FINALLY, THE HUMANS CAME TO A DECISION...
WHICH ONE OF YOU LOT IS WORTH THE MOST EXPERIENCE POINTS?
AND THAT'S WHY THERE'S SO MANY ANCIENT RUINED CITIES ALL OVER THE PLACE FOR US TO LOOT.
NONE OF YOUR STORIES END WITH "HAPPILY EVER AFTER," DO THEY?
I DUNNO. I THINK I WOULD'VE DONE THE SAME THING, PRETTY MUCH.
IT KEEPS THE CONSTRUCTION GUILDS OCCUPIED, AT LEAST.

DORK TOWER®
BY JOHN KOVALIC
OK, KEN... COULD YOU PASS ME THOSE ORCS... AND THOSE ORCS... AND THOSE ORCS...
DO WE HAVE TO DO THIS?
AB-SOLUTELY!
MINIATURES ARE INVALUABLE TO ANY ROLEPLAYING GAME.
YESSSS....
PARTICULARLY NOW THAT THEY COME PRE-PAINTED AND CHEAP! THE SKY'S THE LIMIT WITH WHAT YOU CAN SET UP!
"ESPECIALLY WHEN IT COMES TO COMBAT! IT MAY SLOW THINGS DOWN A LITTLE, BUT LOOK AT ALL THE BENEFITS!"
NOW WE'LL KNOW JUST WHAT RANGES SPELLS REALLY REACH... WE'LL SEE THE BATTLE EXACTLY AS IT UNFOLDS... YOU CAN STRATEGIZE MORE EFFECTIVELY...
NOW WE'LL KNOW EXACTLY WHERE YOUR THIRD-LEVEL CLERIC, FIGHTER AND THIEF ARE IN THE FIGHT!
...AS THE 1,675 ORCS AMBUSH THEM...
DUNGEON MASTERS CAN BE A PETTY, PETTY BREED, YOU KNOW...
WHAT'S THAT? SORRY. TOO BUSY LIFTING THIS BOX OF 576 GOBLINS THAT ARE OUTFLANKING YOU...
KOVALIC

©2005 SHETLAND PRODUCTIONS
JOHN@KOVALIC.COM
WWW.DORKTOWER.COM
HTTP://WWW.LIVEJOURNAL.COM/USERS/MUSKRAT_JOHN

ZOMBIE!!!
Yeee-HAW!
ZOGONIA
By TONY
STOP! STOP!! DON'T KILL THAT ZOMBIE-GIRL! TH-THAT'S BONNIE! MY EX-GIRLFRIEND!
TONY MOSELEY © 2005 WWW.ZOGONIA.COM
YOU DATED A ZOMBIE?!
SHE WAS ALIVE BACK THEN!! ALIVE AND... ..choke... BEAUTIFUL.
WE WERE MADLY IN-LOVE! SHE KILLED ALL MY FRIENDS AND I KILLED ALL HER FRIENDS, SO WE'D ONLY HAVE EACH OTHER... LIKE IN A FAIRY TALE.
BUT THEN SHE BROKE-UP WITH ME ... BECAUSE WE WENT TO A RESTAURANT AND .. I-I ORDERED A COW-BRAIN SANDWICH! SHE SAID I GROSSED HER OUT BEYOND REDEMPTION.
ARE YOU WANTING TO TAKE HER BACK TO TOWN, TO GET HER RESURRECTED?
HELL NO!! I WANT TO KILL HER MYSELF!
WHO'S THE BRAIN-EATER NOW, BONNIE? Huh? WHO'S THE BRAIN-EATER NOW?!
cHop cHop cHop
sob sob HEY! SHE'S STILL WEARING THE PLATINUM-AND-DIAMOND RING I BOUGHT HER.
IF YOU GUYS DON'T MIND, I THINK THIS RING SHOULD GO TO ME.... CONSIDERING I BOUGHT IT IN THE FIRST PLACE.
SURE. KEEP IT.
SO...DO YOU THINK KEV SPOTTED THE RING AND INVENTED THE GIRLFRIEND-STORY, TO GET THE RING?
LORD, I HOPE SO.
end